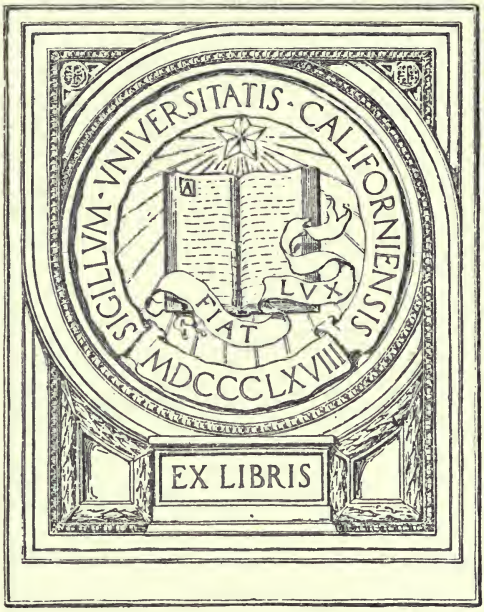
THIRTY YEARS ON THE FRONTIER.



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They Crossed the Gila at Flood Tide (page 188).

Thirty Years on The Frontier

....BY....

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AUTHOR OF

"Rodney Wilkes," "The Luxury of Poverty," "A Modern Jean Valjean," "Facts and Fancies."

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I. In Days of Innocence	1
II. Out for a Fortune	9
III. Black Hills Days	16
IV. The Custer Massacre	21
V. The Shadow Scout	31
VI. Indian Fight in Colorado	39
VII. A Cow Boy Duel	47
VIII. Pleasant Halfacre's Revenge	53
IX. Capturing Wild Horses	63
X. An Expedition That Failed	72
XI. Across the Palm Desert	79
XII. The Last Stand of a Dying Race	87
XIII. The Tragedy of the Lost Mine	98
XIV. The Land of the Fair God	107
XV. Outlawry in Oklahoma	115
XVI. A New Land of Canaan	125
XVII. Told Around the Camp Fire	134
XVIII. The Lone Grave on the Mesa	141
XIX. Under the Black Flag	148
XX. In Cuban Jungles	156
XXI. Emulous of Washington	164

CHAPTER. PAGE.

XXII. On the Round Up.....169
XXIII. The Egypt of America.....179
XXIV. In the Dome of the Sky.....190
XXV. Where Nature is at her Best.....197
XXVI. When the West was New.....207

Thirty Years on the Frontier

I

IN DAYS OF INNOCENCE.

In the following pages I shall tell of much personal experience as well as important incidents which have come under my observation during thirty years on the frontier. As a cowboy, miner and pioneer, I have participated in many exciting events, none of which, however, caused me the prolonged grief that a certain bombshell affair did when I was a boy, resulting in a newspaper experience and habit of telling things, and eventually led to my coming West.

My grandfather's plantation in Kentucky and nearly opposite the town of Newburgh, on the Indiana side, was as much my home as was my mother's. She being a widow and having my brother and sister to care for, as

well as myself, felt a relief from the responsibility of looking after me when I was at my grandfather's home.

The plantation faced the Ohio River, the wooded part of which had been a camping ground for rebel soldiers, until they were driven out by the shells of a Yankee gunboat. While hunting pecans in these woods one day, I stumbled on to an unexploded bombshell, and, boylike, I wanted to see the thing go off. However, I was afraid to touch it until I had counseled with the Woods boys, whose father was a renter of a small tract of ground below the plantation. That night the three of us met and decided to explode the shell the following Sunday morning, after the folks had gone to church. I feigned a headache when grandmother wanted to take me in the carriage with them to church, but when I was satisfied they were well down the road, I hurried to the strip of forest a mile away, where the Woods boys were waiting. They had come in a rickety old buggy drawn by a white mule. It was in autumn and as the leaves were dry on the ground, we were afraid to kindle a fire, and decided to take the shell near the tobacco barn, around which we could

hide and watch it go off. Neither of the boys would handle it, so I lifted it into the buggy; then they were afraid to ride with it, and it was left to me to lead the mule to the tobacco barn. I hitched the animal to a sapling near the barn, while the other boys gathered up some kindling, and we made a pile of old fence posts, and when I had laid the shell upon the log heap, we lit the kindling with a match and all ran behind the barn, forgetting all about the mule. The wood was dry and was soon all aflame. Every little while one of us would peek around the corner to see if the thing was not about ready to explode. We were getting impatient, when the mule gave a great "hee haw" that called our attention to his peril. It was his last "hee haw," for in a second more the bomb exploded with a deafening noise, and fragments of the shell screamed like a panther in the air. We ran around to see the result of the explosion, and behold! it had spread that mule all over the side of the barn.

The things my grandfather said and did to me when he returned from church does not concern the public. But when he had finished, I was fully convinced that I was all to

blame, and that I owed Mr. Woods $150 for his demolished mule.

Then followed long lectures from my mother and grandmother, and to add to my discomfiture was Mr. Woods' lamentations and his expressed regrets that it was not me, instead of his mule, that was blown up.

I was the owner of an old musket with which I spent most of my time hunting rabbits, using small slugs of lead for shot, which I chopped up with a hatchet. Two weeks before the bombshell episode, I had found a musket-ball, and I concluded to try a man's load in the gun on my next rabbit; I poured in a full charge of powder, but when I came to ram the ball home, it would go only half way down the barrel. I was afraid to shoot then, lest the gun might burst, and as I could neither get the ball out or farther down, I laid the barrel between two logs, tied a string to the trigger, and got behind a stump and pulled it off.

A few minutes later while I was examining my gun, grandfather came running out of the potato patch to find who was shooting at him. However, he was so thankful that matters

were not worse, that I got off with a slight reprimand.

But this Sunday capped the climax. A council of my kinfolks was held that night, and decided that neither man nor beast was safe on that plantation if I remained. Their final verdict was that I should be sent to my mother's home in Newburgh, and there to learn the printer's trade, attend Frederick Dickerman's night school, be made to pay for the mule, and my musket confiscated. I was paid $3 a week as printer's devil to start with, one dollar of which I might spend for my clothes, fifty cents for tuition in the night school, one dollar and twenty-five cents for the mule debt, and the other twenty-five cents I might spend.

Grandfather was very careful to see that I saved the mule money, and I used to think he took a special delight in collecting it from mother, to whom I paid it every week.

It took me nearly three years in that printing office to get out of debt. I was now eighteen years of age.

Life in the printing office was too monotonous; I wanted a more exciting scene of action. I used to watch the great river steam-

ers come and go, and wondered if I could hold any kind of a position on one of them, except carrying freight, when by accident one day there came an opportunity. The steamer "Dick Johnson" was lying at the wharf loading hogsheads of tobacco, when the freight clerk was injured by a fall of the stage plank. The captain wanted someone to take his place, and my schoolmaster recommended me. Here was a chance to put in practice the bookkeeping I had studied under him. It was what I wanted—I could now get a glimpse of the outside world.

The position on the "Dick Johnson" was a stepping-stone, for in another year I was the mate of the steamer "Rapidan," plying between Florence, Alabama, and Evansville, Indiana, and had thirty negroes under my control.

It was historic country through which we passed. The trees on the islands near Pittsburgh Landing yet showed signs of shot and shell fired by federal gunboats. Ofttimes some passenger who had been a participant on one side or the other at Shiloh, would entertain his listeners for hours with stories of

the fight, until some of us younger officers became imbued with the war spirit.

The autumn of 1875 had come when yellow fever broke out aboard our boat, and we lay in quarantine two miles below Savannah, Tennessee, for a month. I stayed with the boat until we were released, and then went to my home in Newburgh, ill with malarial fever.

Stories of rich gold finds in the Northwest had been circulated through the newspapers, and one day I resolved to try my luck. The things we believe we are doing for the last time, always cause a pang of sorrow, and as I packed my valise on Sunday afternoon to leave forever the home of childhood, my feelings can be better imagined than described. My grandparents came over from their Kentucky home to bid me good-bye. When I was ready to start, grandfather took from his pocket a roll of bills, and placing them in my hands, said: "Here, Mackey, is your mule money, and I have added interest enough to make the sum total $500. I paid Mr. Woods for his mule, but I wanted to teach you a lesson. Profit by it, and make good use of the money, and say, Mackey, whatever you do in

life, never insult a blind man, never strike a cripple and never marry a fool.''

It was the last time I ever saw the noble old guardian of my youth. The first two of his parting injunctions I have religiously obeyed.

II.

OUT FOR A FORTUNE.

My first view of the Nebraska plains was the next morning after leaving Omaha, and I thought I never saw anything half so grand. The February sun threw its beams aslant the mighty sea of plain over which so many white covered wagons had toiled on their way to the then wild regions of the West.

Small herds of buffalo and antelope were frequently seen from the car windows; the passengers fired at them and often wounded an antelope, which limped away in a vain attempt to join its mates. That night we witnessed the mighty spectacle of the plains on fire. The huge, billowy waves of flame leaped high against a darkened sky, and swept with hiss and roar along the banks of the shallow Platte. The emigrant train upon which I was aboard was crowded with people of all sorts. Many of them were homeseekers

on their way to Oregon and California, while not a few adventurers like myself were bound for the Black Hills. A young man who went under the name of Soapy Wyatte, was working the train on a three-card monte game, and was very successful until he cheated a couple of ranchmen out of quite a sum of money. Then they organized the other losers, and were in the act of hanging him with the bell rope when he disgorged his ill-gotten gains and paid back the money. Men of his class were plentiful, but as a rule they were careful not to cheat the frontiersman, for when they did they usually got the worst of it.

Cheyenne at that time was a typical frontier town. Gambling houses, saloons and dance halls were open continuously, night and day. Unlucky indeed was the tenderfoot who fell into their snare. I soon secured transportation with a mule-train for Deadwood. There were thirty-three of us in the party. The wagons were heavily loaded with freight and the trail was in frightful condition; we ofttimes were compelled to walk.

I had bought a heavy pair of boots for the

trip, but the sticky alkali mud made them so heavy that I soon cut off the tops. The next thing, I put my Winchester rifle and revolver in the wagon and then trudged along the best I could. The Sioux Indians were on the warpath and it was dangerous to get far away from the wagon train. Almost every freighter we met warned us against Red Canyon. The stage drivers reported "hold ups" and murders by organized bands of road agents. This kept us on the alert. At night there was a detail of eight, to divide up the night in standing guard. These men were selected from the most experienced plainsmen, of whom there were quite a number with us.

We were eight days out from Cheyenne, and several inches of snow had fallen during the night, but the sun rose clear on the biting cold of the morning. Suddenly we heard shots ahead. "Indians! Indians!" shouted one driver to another and then the wagons were quickly formed in a circle, the mules being unhitched and brought to the center of the circle.

Then for the first time I saw the hideous forms of a band of half-naked savages

mounted on their ponies in the distance. They were galloping in a circle around us, yelling their war cry, "Hi-yi, Hip-yi, yi." They fell from their horses before the deadly aim of our men; their bullets came like the angry hum of hornets about our heads. Their numbers increased from over the foothills, whence they first came. There was a look of desperation upon the faces of our men, such as pen can not describe. James Morgan, who was standing near me in the act of reloading his Winchester, suddenly fell nerveless to the ground. Our captain's voice rang out now and then, "Be careful there, boys; take good aim before you fire." Two Indians circled nearer than the others. They were lying on their horses' necks and firing at us while they were at full gallop. I took aim at one and fired; others must have done so at the same time, for both of them fell from their horses. The fight lasted perhaps an hour, when the Indians withdrew to the hills. One of our men lay dead and two were wounded. I went to where the two Indians had fallen. There lay their forms, cold and stiff in death. The sunbeams were slanting over those snow covered hills. I felt an un-

accountable terror as I looked upon them and the crimson snow which their life blood had stained. The raw north wind seemed to pierce my very heart. Night was coming on, and with it all the horrors of uncertainty. I lingered about the spot for some time, with a dreadful fascination mingled with terror. Human life had perished there; human souls had gone into the uncertainty of an unknown beyond. With my brain reeling with excitement of the day and sickened in heart, I returned to our wagons, where some of us walked outside the circle throughout the long watches of that wintry night.

When the morning sun rose clear above the snow-covered hills, we wrapped the body of the dead teamster in his blankets, and again took up the toilsome drive. The Indians had retired from the fight, probably for the reason that they saw another outfit of wagons coming far down on the plain. The wagons overtook us about 9 o'clock, and after that we had no more trouble with Indians.

Deadwood, at that time, was like all the frontier mining towns. Saloons, gambling houses and dance halls comprised the busi-

ness of the place. The gulch was dotted with miners' cabins and dug-outs. There were a few stores, restaurants, and a bank, but as yet the town had not started a "regular" graveyard. The news of our fight soon spread up and down the gulch and many were the willing hands that offered their services in the burial of James Morgan, our teamster. They dug his grave on the hillside, where afterwards more than five thousand men were buried. They either fell from the deadly pneumonia, or from the bullets of each other in quarrels. When Morgan's grave was ready to be filled, some one suggested that a chapter from the Bible should be read, but none of us knew where to ask for one, in all Deadwood. Presently a boy said, "I will find one," and he soon returned with a young lady, who proved to be his sister. He handed the book to our bronzed captain of the mule train; he shook his head. Then someone asked her to read it. When she began, those grim frontiersmen bared their heads, and I fancied I saw the tears gather on more than one bronzed cheek as she knelt upon the frozen clay and offered up a prayer for the dead teamster's soul.

The adventurous spirits from far and wide were flocking to this new Eldorado. Wild Bill, the famous scout, Captain Jack Crawford, Texas Jack, and other equally noted scouts and Indian fighters, were there. They sought gold and adventure alike, only for the pleasure it would bring.

III.

BLACK HILLS DAYS.

I knew Doc Kinnie was not a civil engineer, but he had a plan which looked good, and as I was almost broke, I consented to help him work it. There was a horseshoe bend in the creek which might be drained for placer mining by tunneling through in a narrow place. I talked up the project with some of the boys, and they agreed to dig the tunnel while Doc did the civil engineering. Day after day they dug and blasted rock, while Doc stood around looking wise and encouraging the work. In about a month they were practically through to the other side of the creek. Then they began to call for Doc's measurements and calculations. "Never mind, you are not through yet," he would say, "I will let you know when to stop digging."

"But we can hear the water rushing," they would say.

General George A. Custer (page 21).

"You fellows can't tell anything about it. Sounds of rushing water are always carried a long distance by rocks."

"But we are not in the rocks now, we are in a clay bank."

"Clay does the same thing; keep on digging."

Two days later and there was a commotion at the lower end of the tunnel, when a full head of water came rushing out, bearing with it men, wheelbarrows and shovels. They were nearly drowned, and half frozen, when they scrambled out of the creek. Mad as hornets, they sought their civil engineer, but he was nowhere to be found. The work was done. The prospects were good. When their clothes were dried and they had eaten dinner, they laughed over the incident and pardoned Doc's miscalculation. With pan and rocker, we now began to work the dry horseshoe bend. Nuggets weighing an ounce, and from that on down to the size of a pin head, were found. The fellows were honest, and made an even divide all around at the clean-up each night. In two months we had taken out over $6,000, and then sold the claim to a placer mining company for $18,000 in cash—

$3,000 apiece for the six of us. In two months we were all broke; the money had gone into wildcat speculation in mines. But who cared? Were the hills not full of gold, and all to be had for the digging?

I joined a party who went thirty miles to the northwest in search of new diggings, and the most that came of it was a laughable incident.

The great hills rose on every side, frowning darkly in the dense forest of pine. Our voices echoed from rock to rock, as we sat one noon-day about our campfire, talking of possible finds, when, bareheaded, with hair disheveled, blood flowing from a wound in his face, and a wildcat held to his chest in close embrace, Mark Witherspoon rushed into camp, yelling at the top of his voice. He was prospecting in a ravine a mile distant, when he saw something waving in the underbrush. Thinking it was mountain grouse, he advanced in hope of getting a shot, when a huge wildcat sprang at his throat.

As the forepaws of the animal struck his chest, he let fall his gun, and hugged the beast with all his strength to his chest with both arms. The head of the wildcat was

drawn slightly backward by the tense pressure of his arms upon its back, while the claws were rendered practically powerless by the close embrace. So quick had been Witherspoon's action at the start, that he received only a slight wound on the face. In this predicament, he started on a run for the camp. He did not dare to let go and the wildcat wouldn't, so both held fast. The cat glared up fiercely at him with its yellow eyes, while its hot breath came into his face at every leap. Whenever the vicious beast made the slightest struggle, Witherspoon hugged the tighter, fearing at every step he might stumble and the deadly teeth be fixed in his throat.

In this manner he reached camp, and it was some seconds before he could make us understand that the cat was terribly alive, and that he was not holding it because he wanted to, or racing for the sake of the exercise. Finally one of the men despatched the animal with his revolver, and, to Witherspoon's inexpressible relief, the dead beast dropped from his arms. Before the boys got through telling the story afterwards, they

made it out that Witherspoon had run nine miles with the wildcat.

Soon after our return to Deadwood, a man in an almost fainting condition came into town and announced that his companion had either been killed or captured by the Indians. A party was organized and was led by Wild Bill. It was not long before we came upon a scene that told what the poor fellow's fate had been, much plainer than words are able to portray. We found his blackened trunk fastened to a tree with rawhide thongs, while all around were evidences of the great torture which had been inflicted ere the fagots had been lighted.

When brought face to face with this, I stowed two cartridges safely away in my vest pocket, resolved to suicide rather than to fall into the hands of such miscreants. Then came the news of the Custer massacre. For many days afterward we patrolled the mountain tops, and kept bivouac fires lighted by night, as signals.

IV.

THE CUSTER MASSACRE.

The arrival at Fort Lincoln, on the Missouri River, of a party of Indians in 1874, who offered gold dust for sale, was the beginning of the cause that led to the great Sioux war in 1876, in which General Custer and his devoted soldiers were massacred on the Little Big Horn River on the 25th day of June of that year.

The gold which the Indians brought to Fort Lincoln, they said came from the Black Hills, where the gulches abounded with the yellow dust. The consequent rush of white men into that region was, in fact, a violation of the treaty of 1867, when Congress sent out four civilians and three army officers as peace commissioners, who gave to the old Dakota tribes, as the Sioux were then called, the vast area of land bounded on the south by Nebraska, on the east by the Missouri

River, on the west by the 104th Meridian, and on the north by the 46th Parallel. They had the absolute pledge of the United States that they should be protected in the peaceable possession of the country set aside for them. This territory was as large as the state of Michigan, and of its interior little or nothing was known except to a few hardy traders and trappers prior to 1874.

With the advent of the gold seekers in 1875 the Indians saw that the greedy encroachments of the white man were but faintly resisted by the United States government, and that sooner or later it meant the total occupation of their country, and their own annihilation, and so with the traditional wrongs of their forefathers ever in mind, they determined to make a stand for their rights.

The scene of General Terry's campaign against these Indians lay between the Big Horn and Powder Rivers, and extended from the Big Horn Mountains northerly to beyond the Yellowstone River. A region barren and desolate, volcanic, broken and ofttimes almost impassable, jagged and precipitous cliffs, narrow and deep arroyas filled with

massive boulders, alkali water for miles, vegetation of cactus and sagebrush—all these represent feebly the country where Custer was to contend against the most powerful, warlike and best armed body of savages on the American continent.

An army in this trackless waste was at that time at the mercy of guides and scouts. The sun rose in the east and shone all day upon a vast expanse of sagebrush and grass and as it set in the west cast its dull rays into a thousand ravines that neither man nor beast could cross; to go north or south could only be decided by personal effort. An insignificant turn to the wrong side of a little knoll or buffalo wallow would ofttimes lead the scout into ravine after ravine, or over bluff after bluff, until at last he would stand on the edge of a yawning canon, hundreds of feet in depth and with perpendicular walls. Nothing was left for him to do but to retrace his steps and find an accessible route.

Custer had been ordered by General Terry to proceed with his command, numbering 28 officers and 747 soldiers, up the Rosebud River, and if the trail of the Indians was not found at a given point, to then follow the

course of the Little Big Horn. These instructions were followed, and on the 24th of June he turned westerly toward the Little Big Horn, where a large Indian village was discovered some fifteen miles distant. The trail they were on led down the stream at a point south of the villages. Major Reno with three companies was ordered to follow the trail, cross the stream and charge down its north bank, while Captain F. W. Benteen was sent with three companies to make a detour south of Reno.

The point where the little armies separated, many of their men never to meet again, the river wound its silvery course for miles in the narrow valley as far as the eye could reach; its banks were fringed with the elm and cottonwood, whose foliage hid from view a thousand Indian tepees beyond the river. Sharp eyes had noted the advancing columns, and quick brains had already begun to plan their destruction.

That night the three divisions made a silent bivouac beneath the stars which must have looked down like pitying eyes.

In the grey light of the morning, and with

noiseless call to boots and saddles, they were stealing on toward the foe.

Reno proceeded to the river and crossed it, charged down its west banks and met with little resistance at first. Soon, however, he was attacked by such numbers that he was obliged to dismount his men, shelter his horses in a strip of woods and fight on foot. Finally, finding he would soon be surrounded, he again mounted his men, charged the enemy and recrossing the river, took a naturally fortified position on the top of a bluff.

Benteen, returning from his detour, discovered his position and drove away the Indians and joined him. Soon the mule train was also within his lines, making seven companies under his command.

Reno engaged the Indians soon after noon on the 25th and did some hard fighting until the evening of the 26th, when the enemy withdrew. After congratulations with their reinforcements the question uppermost in every mind was: "Where is Custer?"

They had heard heavy firing on the afternoon of the 25th and saw the black cloud of smoke settle like a pall over the valley, but Reno had his wounded to care for, and to

have gone to the relief of Custer would have left them to be butchered. Neither could he divide his command, for such a course would have been suicidal.

Meanwhile the supply steamer, Far West, with General Terry on board, steamed up the Yellowstone on June 23rd and overtook Gibbon's troops near the mouth of the Big Horn on the morning of the 24th. At 5 o'clock on the morning of the 25th, Gibbon's column was marching over a country so rugged as to tax the endurance of the men to the utmost, and the infantry halted for the night, meantime General Terry pushed ahead with the cavalry and a light mountain battery. On the morning of the 26th, some Crow Indians reported to General Terry that a great fight had been going on the day before, and later scouts reported that a dense, heavy smoke was resting over the southern horizon far ahead, and in a short time it became visible to all.

So broken was the country and progress became so difficult that it was not until the morning of the 27th that Terry's relief column found the trail of Custer.

They had passed cautiously through a dense grove of trees and the head of the column entered upon a beautiful level meadow about a mile in width extending along the west side of the stream and skirted east and west by high bluffs. It was apparent at sight that this meadow had been the site of an immense Indian village and showed signs of hasty abandonment. Hundreds of lodge poles with finely dressed buffalo robes, dried meats, utensils and Indian trinkets were left behind. In a large tepee still standing were the stiffened forms of ten dead Indians. Every step of the march from here on showed signs of a desperate struggle. The dead bodies of Indian horses were seen; here and there were cavalry equipments, and soon the bodies of dead troopers, beside their frantic and still struggling, wounded horses gave evidence of a disastrous battle, and farther on was revealed a scene calculated to appall the stoutest heart. Here was a skirmish line marked by rows of slain with heaps of empty cartridge shells before them, and their officers lay dead just behind them. Still farther on men lay in winrows, their faces still drawn with the awful desperation of a strug-

gle unto death; pulseless hands still clasped blood-stained sabres. Near the highest point of the hill lay the body of General Custer. There was a cordon of his brave defenders dead about him; his long hair was clotted with blood, while a great wound in his breast told how the brave soul had gone somewhere out into the wide waste and hush of eternity. Near him lay the body of his brother, Captain Custer, and some distance away another brother, Boston Custer, and his nephew, Armstrong Reed, a youth of 19. All were scalped except General Custer and Mark Kellogg, a correspondent of the New York Herald.

When the fight was at the hardest a Crow Indian with Custer wrapped himself in a dead Sioux Indian's blanket and made his escape; as he left the field he saw the squaws and Indian children rifling the dead of their trinkets and going about with their stone battle axes beating out the brains of the wounded; they danced about over the dead and dying, mutilating their bodies and singing the wild, wierd strains of their battle songs.

When the welcome news of relief came to Reno's besieged command, strong men wept like children.

Among the first of his men to search among the fallen for a dead friend was one Charles Wilson, a blue-eyed, beardless trooper, a mere boy whose heart seemed to fairly break as he contemplated what must have been the awful death of his comrades. The man he was seeking was Jim Bristow, a tall, dark private whose last words to the young trooper were:

"Charley, my hour has come. We shall ride into this fight and you will come back alone. I want you to promise to take a little trouble for me when I am gone. You will find her face here in this locket upon my breast. I had thought to some day make her my wife, and that thought has gladdened my lonely life. Write to her, Charley, and tell her where is my resting place and that my spirit will wait for hers in that borderland twixt heaven and earth."

The boy answered, and his voice was low with pain. Just then the bugle sounded, and for an instant eye met eye and hand touched hand, and Jim Bristow rode away with Cus-

ter's column. This was the man young Wilson was searching for. The dead were so frightfully mutilated, their bodies bloated, blackened and swollen by the hot rays of the sun that they were buried as speedily as possible, on June 28th. Major Reno and the survivors of his regiment performed the last sad rites over their comrades and then a general retreat to the mouth of the Big Horn River was ordered.

V.

THE SHADOW SCOUT.

The bugle notes had died away, the cloud of battle smoke lifted from the valley and peaceful starlight shone over the rugged hills when a shadow crept out of a deep ravine and skulked into the valley of death and began dealing out retribution. Chief Dull Knife had much to say about it when he surrendered. He spoke in whispers when he referred to it, and he looked suddenly around, as if he feared it was softly stealing upon him to stab him in the back. Chief Gall's braves had something to say about it when they surrendered, and when white men asked them who or what the shadow was, they shook their heads and whispered:

"We kill 'em all, but yet there is one left. It is a white man; there is blood on his face and clothing; he carries a sabre and two revolvers, and the night wind blows his long black hair over his shoulders. It is a spirit

sent by the Great Manitou to watch over the graves of the white soldiers."

White men saw the shadow, hunters, trappers and scouts who built their camp fires near that valley, through which the big mountain wolf skulked and prowled all night long, had felt the mysterious presence of the shadow or had seen it. They fled from their blankets at its soft step, and they had fired at it, and seen it glide off unharmed.

It was not a shadow of sentiment, but a being who sought vengeance for the butchery of the little band of heroes, for the brave comrades who grouped themselves about the noble Custer and fought to the death.

When the soldiers moved out of the valley, leaving so many graves behind them, the wolves rushed out from canon, ravine and den, to dig up the fresh earth and mutilate the dead. The shadow was there—a solitary, mysterious and vigilant sentinel to guard those sacred mounds. It screamed and gestured at the fierce beasts, it fired upon them with rifle and revolver and struck them with bright, keen sabre. The wolves ran here and there, from grave to grave, gnashing their teeth in anger, but the shadow closely pur-

Gathering Up the Dead at Wounded Knee (page 37).

sued them. They formed in groups in the midnight darkness and waited for the shadow to tire out and fall asleep or go away, but it paced up and down over the graves, vigilant and unwearied, and daylight came to hurry the wild beasts to their lairs till another night.

Hunters and scouts had seen the sentinel-beat among the graves in the light of noonday, when men could not be mistaken. The path ran from grave to grave, winding about to take in every one, and then it ran to the river and disappeared in a ledge of rocks. Scouts said it was a path beaten by human feet. The Indians said that a shadow or spirit alone could remain in that lonely spot, having only the company of wild beasts and the graves of the lonely dead.

Once when Red Cloud and a trusty few were scouting to learn the whereabouts of their white foes, they encamped in the valley for the night. The shadow stole among them as they slept, and when the fierce scream aroused the band from their slumbers, five of the red men had been murdered, each throat slashed across with a keen blade. The shadow stood and jeered at the living, who

huddled together like frightened children. When they fled for their lives it pursued them with drawn saber, and one of them had a scar on his shoulder to prove he had been struck with a blade. Next day when a full band of Indians rode into the valley to solve the mystery and secure revenge, they saw no living thing. The bodies of the dead warriors were cut and hacked and gashed. Five of the poor cavalrymen whose brains had been beaten out had been revenged.

Before the crown of a single grave had sunk down, Crazy Horse started to cross the valley at midnight with his lodges. The shadow confronted his band and mocked them, and as the red men hurried along in the darkness, vividly recalling the mad charge of the cavalry, the strange shadow skulked along with the column and fired shot after shot into the band. They fired at it and rushed out to capture it, but it disappeared, as shadows do. Two squaws, a child or two, an old man and two warriors fell by the bullets which the shadow fired. From that time the red men avoided the valley as white men avoid a pest. They would not cross it or

skirt it, even at high noon when the sunshine beat down upon the graves.

Texas Jack, the famous scout in the employ of the army, and a companion, in the late autumn of 1876 crossed the lonely battle-ground and halted long enough to see that the graves had not been disturbed. They saw the path of the sentinel leading from grave to grave. They saw the skeletons of the red men slain by the shadow. They saw the shadow itself. They were leaving the valley when their ears were greeted by a wild laugh, and from a bed of rank grass and dry weeds a quarter of a mile away they saw the shadow beckon them to come forward. The shadow was a man—a tall, gaunt, heavy bearded and long-haired human being dressed in rags that once had been an army uniform. He held up in the air and shook at them a carbine and a sabre, and when they galloped away, he sent a leaden ball whistling over their heads.

This was the last time this trooper was seen alive, no doubt he was bereft of reason, and believed himself called upon to avenge his comrades and so lurked in the valley, liv-

ing like the wild beasts around him and missing no chance to strike a blow.

Some years later, when peace was restored and Crow Dog with his son and two warriors were hunting buffalo on the Little Big Horn, they were themselves pursued by a hostile party of Crow Indians. They took refuge among the shelving rocks along the river. Far into the deep recesses, where the waves and winds for centuries had hollowed out a chamber, they found a skeleton. By its side lay a carbine, two revolvers and a long cavalry sabre; about the neck was a delicately wrought chain with a gold locket attached. This and some other trinkets they carried away. After a lapse of fourteen years from the time Custer and his soldiers fell, these same Sioux Indians were again on the war path in the Bad Lands of South Dakota. Custer's old regiment was there, too. Many of them had fought with Reno and Benteen on that fateful 25th of June, and by the chance of war it was a part of their command under Colonel Forsythe who fought the battle of Wounded Knee. Among them was Charles Wilson, the beardless boy, who rode away with Reno, whilst his friend Jim Bris-

tow followed Custer. No longer a boy, but a bronzed and bearded soldier who had stood the chance of fate in many an Indian fight.

After the battle, when they were gathering up the dead Indians frozen stiff by a four days' blizzard which raged with wild fury over the plain, there was found about the neck of a young warrior a locket and chain. Wilson curiously examined the trophy and found upon opening it, the photograph of Jim Bristow on one side and upon the other the sweet face of the girl who had promised to be his wife. The young brave from whose neck the locket was taken was found to be the son of Crow Dog, who had married into Big Foot's band, and this blood-stained bauble, which had at last found its way into the hands of Bristow's friend as he had intended when they parted, and all the circumstances connected with it, revealed at last the identity of the shadow-scout who kept the midnight vigils over the graves of Custer's heroic dead; who when the chill blasts of the northern winter had come, had crept into his lair among the rocks and far from the cottage where the voice of love had pleaded so long for his return, with the smoke of battle

still before his eyes, and with the shouts and shots of that dreadful day still ringing in his ears, had died alone.

Wilson stood by my side a week later as a heavy army wagon rolled into Pine Ridge agency bearing the body of Sitting Bull, the great war chief, who had directed and led the fight on Custer's men. When the wagon halted, Wilson drew the canvas cover from the dead chief's form and gazed long at the bronzed, cruel face, which even in death, was magnificent in the strong drawn lines of unrelenting hatred. There was a cold glint of light in Wilson's eye as he took one last satisfied look at this dead monster of the plains and turned away to keep his word given fourteen years before to his comrade—Jim Bristow—the last survivor of that awful massacre on the Little Big Horn.

VI.

INDIAN FIGHT IN COLORADO.

Old "Daddy" Stephenson sat in the shade of the ranch house, squinting his one eye toward the north, the other eye having been shot out a few years before. His squaw was boiling the leg of an antelope in a pot that swung under a tripod of sticks nearby, when "Doc" Kinnie and Charley Hayes rode up.

"Here's yer Injun," shouted "Doc," as he untied his lariat from a blanket and let the bloody head of an Indian roll on the ground near Stephenson's feet.

The old squaw came over, took a look, and, uttering a long, doleful sound like the cry of a wounded wolf, ran inside and grabbing her blanket, started for the hills, chanting a dismal wail peculiar to her people when in distress.

"You fellows have played billy hell; you've killed my brother-in-law," calmly remarked Stephenson as he refilled his pipe

and again cast his one eye toward the north.

"And the best thing you can do is to hit the trail while you are wearing your scalps," he continued after a pause of several minutes.

At that moment the old man's half Indian boy and myself came up from the corral.

This incident furnished the cause for an ugly Indian fight which occurred on Rock creek, northeastern Colorado, on June 12, 1877.

"Doc" Kinnie, Charley Hayes and myself had come from Deadwood to Cheyenne as an escort for a stage coach carrying the Wells-Fargo express, when Stephenson offered us better pay to work on his cattle ranch.

Four days before the incident of the bloody head, Stephenson had missed seven head of cattle and had struck the trail of one Indian who had driven them off. He rode to the ranch house in high rage and offered Kinnie and Hayes one hundred dollars if they would recover the cattle and kill the Indian. In five minutes they were in their saddles riding to the point where Stephenson indicated the trail. I did not join them, as Stephenson insisted that two were enough. Kinnie and Hayes had no difficulty in following the trail

Charles Hayes, "Doc" Kinnie, Robert McReynolds.

After the Fight (page 40).

of the stolen cattle and were close on them the next evening. Not caring for a night attack they went into camp, eating their bacon raw rather than make a fire. They were in their saddles at the first grey streak of dawn and within an hour came upon two Indians eating their morning meal in a canon, while the missing cattle were grazing five hundred yards beyond.

It was a complete surprise to the Indians, and in the melee that followed one of them was killed and the other made his escape. It then became a question of how best to prove to Stephenson that they had killed the Indian without the burden of taking him back.

Kinnie, who had been a medical student in Ohio before a certain escapade had caused him to emigrate to the west, suggested the amputation of the dead Indian's head as the handiest way, and also suggested that they keep quiet as to the Indian who got away, lest the old man should only want to pay one-half of the promised reward.

Hayes stood guard while Kinnie cut and twisted the Indian's neck until the head separated from the body. He then rolled it in the Indian's blanket and carried it on the pom-

mel of his saddle until the afternoon, when he rolled the ghastly trophy out on the ground in front of Stephenson and his squaw wife.

"Seems to me if I had your kind of relations I would pay a better price and get them all killed off," said Hayes, as he returned from the corral.

This remark nettled Stephenson, who smoked his pipe awhile in silence. He then grew angry, ordered the three of us to hit the trail for Fort Morgan at once, saying that two thousand Cheyenne Indians would be down upon us as soon as his squaw could communicate with them. This we refused to do, as neither Kinnie nor Hayes, nor their horses were in condition for flight, besides the old man had not settled and we rightly guessed that he would like to get out of paying the one hundred dollars, as well as preserve his good standing with the Indians.

Later in the evening he was caught hiding a quantity of Winchester cartridges. That settled him. We knew then he wanted to see us slain, while he would endeavor to lay blame upon us. In five minutes he was bound hand and foot and laid upon a corner

in the ranch house upon some blankets. The Indian boy was also bound and thrown into another corner for safe keeping. The log ranch house was then loop-holed and our horses were brought inside, also a quantity of hay, wood and water.

We were prepared for a siege. Kinnie and Hayes lay down to sleep, while I kept the first watch of the night. All light was extinguished and I constantly went from loop-hole to loop-hole, peering into the darkness for the approaching foe, while the old man lay upon his blankets, swearing like the old sinner he was. I lay down for some sleep in the after part of the night, leaving the others to watch.

It was daylight when I was awakened by rifle shots. They came from a hill upon whose crest rode forty Cheyenne warriors, bedecked in feathers and war paint and stripped for battle.

We made no reply to their shots, but led them to believe by our silence that the ranch house was deserted.

After pow-wowing for an hour, six of them began advancing cautiously. We waited they were within a hundred feet of the house, when our rifles emptied three of the saddles,

and two more were riderless before the sixth retreating Indian reached the main party, which by that time was in commotion and had begun a circling ride around the ranch house to prevent our escape.

For the remainder of the day they kept well out of reach of our rifles, but when night had gathered they stole away their dead and wounded under cover of darkness. The next morning there was no sign of them. We were not to be caught, however, by such a ruse, having played the same game ourselves the morning before. We felt sure they would be reinforced within two days with an overwhelming force that could easily storm the house and tear it down over our heads.

Our only hope was to get away, and we held a council of war in whispers. The old man and boy had been released at intervals to relieve the pain of the cords, but not a word was said to them of our plans. When darkness again came we saddled our horses, stored a quantity of provisions in our blankets, strapped them behind our saddles and filled our canteens with water.

The Indian boy was then liberated and given these instructions:

"Creep along the banks of the creek until you come to the lone cottonwood tree, one and one-half miles distant, then fire six shots from a revolver. This will draw the Indians to you, when you can explain that we have compelled you to do this. If you fail to fire the shots we will kill the old man and charge through the Indian lines anyway."

This command was delivered to the boy in a manner calculated to impress him with the earnestness of the threat, although it was not our intention to harm Stephenson, and yet the muzzle of a Winchester close to his head caused him to earnestly implore the boy to faithfully do as he was told.

From then the minutes dragged like hours. We watched anxiously from our loop-holes for the flash from the young Indian's revolver. Twenty minutes passed, then thirty, and no shot was fired. Was he playing us false, or had he been captured by the Cheyennes, who in turn might set a trap for us. Thirty-six minutes passed, then a spark flashed in the distance and we counted six shots. This was the critical moment and every ear was listening for the sounds of horses' hoofs. A few moments later we

heard them, as they came out of the ravines. We saw them, too, as they skirted along the dim sky line. We waited a few minutes to give them time to reach the cottonwood tree and then led our horses out and rode rapidly away to the northwest, knowing that the clatter of our horses' hoofs would mingle with those of the Indian ponies and might readily be taken for those of their own horsemen.

Our rifles were in our saddle holsters and our heavy revolvers were in our hands, as we rode in silence. Kinnie was in the lead, while Hayes and I rode behind side by side. Not a word was spoken for more than five hours, until day was breaking, and by the red glow of the eastern sky we saw away down the plains the camp fires and white tents of a troop of cavalry from Fort Morgan. Kinnie burst out into a long, hearty peal of laughter.

"What the deuce has struck you now?" asked Hayes.

"I forgot to give daddy any change back," he replied, as he held up a well-filled pocketbook.

VII.

A COWBOY DUEL.

Tom Rawlins rolled out of his blankets from under the chuck wagon with the remark, "I suppose a man shouldn't be late at his own funeral," and walking over to the campfire, lit his pipe by the glowing embers.

Day was breaking, and by a solemn compact entered into with "Kid" Anderson the night before, he would be dead at sunrise.

A month before they had exchanged shots in a dance house in Ogallala, after quarreling about a woman. The two cowboys met in North Platte the day before, for the first time since the affair, and each swore the other should die.

Many of us who were friends of the two men divided into factions and crowded about the principals. The declaration of war having been made on both sides, neither could withdraw without losing caste, as such was the custom in the 70's among the wild fellows

of the plains, who put a cheap estimate on human life. Rawlins had seen four years' service in the Confederate army, and at the close of the war had followed General Joe Shelby into Mexico and fought under the banner of Maxmilian. When Bazaine withdrew the French troops he secured his discharge and returned to Texas wearing the honorable scars of battle. "Kid" Anderson was inured to the life on the plains from his youth and had been in many an ugly Indian fight.

Someone suggested a duel, and no Indian ever conceived a more fiendish plan. Two Colt revolvers with handles exactly alike, one loaded, the other unloaded, were placed under a blanket with handles protruding. A silver dollar was tossed into the air, heads to win, tails to lose. The winner was to have the choice of the revolvers. If he drew the loaded one, he had the right to shoot the loser, who was to stand ten paces away with the unloaded weapon in his hand. Rawlins won the choice of revolvers and drew the empty one.

Anderson then spent a month's wages buying drinks for the boys, and kindly gave Rawlins until sunrise the next morning to live.

Rawlins accepted his fate with stoicism and returned to camp, rolled in his blankets and slept soundly. Inured to danger for years, he knew sooner or later the end would come, and so gave himself but little concern about it.

It was the spring round up and there were fifteen outfits in camp within two miles of North Platte, and the round up would begin as soon as two more outfits arrived.

The news of the plan and chance of fate by which Rawlins was to lose his life had spread from one camp-fire to another during the night, and created an intense excitement.

Rawlins was standing by the fire, when I. P. Olive, one of the largest owners on the range, rode up.

"Look here, Rawlins, suppose you had won, would you shoot Anderson down like a dog this morning?"

"Certainly I would," he replied, "and he would not be the first dog I have killed, either."

"This thing cannot go on," said Olive, decisively. "If you men have got to kill each other you must do it in a civilized fashion. Your plan is too cold-blooded; it has given

the shivers to the entire camp." He then rode over to the "Double Bar" camp, where Anderson lay sleeping.

"Get up from there, you wild ass of the plains," he shouted. "Rawlins is waiting to be killed. Are you going to do it?"

Anderson was on his feet in an instant, facing Olive in the dim light of the camp-fire.

"It is none of your business what I intend to do!" and his yellow eyes gleamed dangerously as his hand stole to the handle of his sixshooter. Olive was a dangerous man himself and had a record of killing four men in Texas. He saw danger in the manner he had approached Anderson, and using a more conciliatory tone, said:

"Give Rawlins a show for his life and we will all think the more of you for it."

Finding the sentiment of others who joined in with Olive strong against him, Anderson yielded to a change. This time the principals were to meet upon the plain a mile from camp, mounted and armed with revolvers. They were to fight within a circle of one hundred yards, outside of which they might retreat, reload and return to the combat.

It was a beautiful morning, all balm and

bloom and verdure. The face of the sky was placid and benignant. The sun rose like a great golden disc on the purple and pearl of the distant sky line and clouds, airy and gossamer, floated away to the west.

The men stole away from camp in twos and threes, and were gathering on a knoll that overlooked the battle ground, while Rawlins and Anderson were selecting their horses from the remudas. Rawlins chose a Texas mustang, fleet of foot and supple as an Arab. Anderson chose a stocky built animal and appeared altogether indifferent as to any of his qualities. The two men were stationed at the edge of the circle formed of lariats with their backs toward each other.

Olive gave the word, "Ready!" The men grasped their bridle reins tightly and settled themselves in their stirrups.

"Wheel!" The trained horses turned as if upon pivots.

"Fire!" rang out Olive's clear voice of command.

Anderson rode forward a few paces and stopped. Rawlins dug his spurs into his animal's side, and came on with a rush, firing

his revolver as he came. Four shots sped harmlessly over the plain.

The men were within a few feet of each other when Anderson fired his first shot. Rawlins reeled in his saddle a second, grasped the pommel, and bringing down his revolver sent a bullet through the brain of Anderson.

Both men fell from their horses, and there were two dead faces in the grass.

The horses dashed wildly away, with blood upon their trappings and sleek hides.

Two graves were dug, and the funeral was over before the sun had dried the dew upon the grass.

There was a girl in Nebraska without a lover, and a widowed mother in Texas without a son.

VIII.

PLEASANT HALFACRE'S REVENGE.

I was with a party of cowboys twenty-five miles west of Ogallala, Nebraska, in 1878, when a huge iron box was found in the sands of the Platte River by one of our party, which recalled a tradition of tragedy and revenge, unequaled in the annals of the west.

In one of those great bends of the Ohio River, opposite Three Mile Island and below the town of Newburgh, in Southern Indiana, there lived some forty years ago, a man who furnished cause for which his neighbors with one accord, joined in deporting him.

Pleasant Halfacre occupied a cabin in a small clearing, which opened on the south, facing the bayou which separated the island from the mainland on the Indiana side. On all other sides for a mile or more was a dense forest, where great hickory, pecan and beech trees furnished the winter provender for the

grey squirrels, raccoons and opossums. In some places the woodland was low and swampy; there were great ponds where the water lilies grew and in winter the wild duck and brant paused long in their southern flight to feed. The bayou abounded in catfish and silvery perch.

In this little oasis in a desert of toilers, Halfacre had lived for nearly a quarter of a century. His wife, a big buxom woman, was the mother of eight tow-headed children who, when anyone chanced to come, acted like scared squirrels. They would scamper away into the woods and coyly peep at the stranger from behind big trees, while the dogs kept up an incessant barking.

In summer, the woman and children would cultivate the small clearing with hoes, while Plez would catch catfish and sometimes work in the harvest field a few days for some neighbor. This he did only when dire necessity compelled. The very sight of an agricultural implement, he declared, would make him sweat. The man loved nature and in his simplicity, would go into raptures over the coloring of the gorgeous sunset, or wade about the ponds for hours for water lilies, or

the great blue, bell-shaped flowers which grew upon the wild flag and calimus stalks.

He would bedeck his ragged garments with these flowers and, with a string of catfish, would emerge, a gorgeous spectacle, from the forest on his way to the Evansville market.

In winter his children would gather pecans and hickory nuts, while he would take the dogs and hunt raccoons and opossums, the meat of which furnished the family food, while the pelts brought a small price at the market.

In all the forty years of his life, Halfacre had not been twenty miles away from his home. He could neither read nor write and the world to him ended at the blue rim of the northern horizon beyond the cypress hills. The man was totally devoid of any sense of responsibility, either to his Creator, his neighbors or himself. Once when the good preacher, who held services at the "Epworth meeting house" twice a month, reproved him for some misdemeanor by threatening him with the hereafter, he replied. "The devil can't inflict any more punishment on me than I can stand, if he does, he will kill me." With this logic to soothe his conscience, and his

love of idleness thoroughly gratified, Half-acre was very well contented.

For a long time the neighbors, for many miles around, had been missing articles of small value, the loss of which caused much delay in their work as well as vexation and annoyance.

A farmer would be all ready to go to market and when he came to hitch up, he would find the coupling bolt to his wagon gone, or perhaps the singletree would be missing; or if ploughing in the field he would take the horses out to where he had left the plow the night before and find that the clevis or some bolts had been stolen. The good matrons would have their dinner horns or bells taken away at night. Nothing of any considerable value was stolen and no organized search was made until one day, Farmer Beasley was floating down the bayou in a dinkey boat when he came upon one of Plez Halfacre's children sitting on the bank eating mush and milk out of the blue flowered shaving mug which old Tippecanoe Harrison had presented to his grandfather, while another one of the Halfacre children sat upon a log, making a paw-paw whistle with his ancestor's razor.

This was too much for Farmer Beasley. He turned the dinkey boat around, paddled back to Newburgh and swore out a search warrant for the Halfacre cabin.

In the loft they found a collection of articles which was a wonder to behold. There were grindstones, iron wedges for splitting rails, harrow teeth and a miscellaneous lot of plunder, enough to start a second hand store.

The word was passed and the next day the farmers began to assemble. They came by the score; some in wagons bringing the entire family and their dinners, and the day was spent identifying stolen articles.

Meantime,, while all this was going on Pleasant Halfacre sat to one side, looking the very picture of dejection. A council was held and it was decided that if they sent Plez to jail, the county would have to support his family, and as taxes were already high, it was decided to deport him, his family and chattels.

Nearby, a house boat was found, which the owner offered to sell for twenty dollars. It was purchased and Halfacre, his family and effects were placed aboard and warned never

to return, whereupon the boat was shoved out into the stream.

It was a sad blow and one the least expected. "To leave the cabin and go away where he should never again see the water lilies, out into the world where he just didn't know nobody." This was the burden of his lamentations as he sat upon the bow of the boat and wept.

Some of the women cried softly when they saw such evidence of his grief and love of home, humble and poverty stricken as it was, and they rode home in silence, wishing to forget the scene of the grief stricken man, who had said the birds would never sing so sweetly to him again.

When the word went around a day or two later, that Plez and his family were again living in the cabin, there was a general sigh of relief, and when the preacher spoke of forgiving "Those who trespass against us," there were some heartfelt Amens that went up from the holy corner of the "Epworth Church."

Winter had come and the Halfacres were discussed by the good dames who gathered at each others homes at quilting parties, and

many were the articles of outgrown clothing that were sent to the destitute cabin.

There was a January thaw and the ice in the river was breaking up, when one morning in the grey dawn a barge came drifting down the stream amid the cakes of ice that were piling high upon the head of the island. A man was standing upon the deck, frantically calling for help, for it was certain the barge would be crushed in the great pack of ice when it struck the head of the island.

A crowd had followed along the shore, but none seemed to know what to do or to have the courage to venture to the man's rescue.

Suddenly Plez Halfacre was seen to launch a skiff from among a clump of willows and standing on the bow, fought his way through the ice floes with an oar, rescued the man from his perilous position and landed safely below the head of the island.

The barge was lost and Plez became the hero of the hour.

The rescued man proved to be a wealthy coal mine owner from the neighborhood of Cannelton, and in his gratitude some days later he presented Halfacre with a cheque for $5,000.

Again a pressure of the neighborhood was brought to bear, and Halfacre emigrated to the west. He started alone with his family from Omaha in a prairie schooner, intending to settle in the neighborhood of Denver. When twenty-five miles west of Ogallala he left his family in camp one afternoon and wandered some miles away over the plain in search of antelope.

When he returned some hours later he found his wife and children slain by the Indians and their mutilated bodies lying about the smoldering ruins of his wagon. The horses had been driven away.

Wild with grief and rage, he did the best he could in burying his dead, and then made his way back to Omaha. He met with much sympathy from the pioneers along the route, but for this he seemed to care but little. He went about in a gloomy, abstracted way that caused people to say he was losing his mind.

One day he appeared at a blacksmith shop in Omaha, and ordered a big wagon box made of plow steel, which he paid for in advance. When it was completed he loaded it upon a wagon and covered it with a white cover, until it looked like an ordinary prairie schooner.

Into this he loaded a barrel for water and provisions enough to last for six months. He also stored in the iron box, a large quantity of ammunition, with two or three rifles and revolvers. The sides, bottom and top of the box were loopholed, protected with iron slides.

When all was ready he purchased horses and drove to the place near the Platte river, where his family had been slain. Here he picketed his horses and deliberately built a camp-fire. He did not have long to wait for results. The Indians saw the smoke, and seeing only one man, they swept down upon his camp. He waited until they were reasonably near and went inside his iron box. When they came to within a few yards, he opened fire from the loop-holes, killing a number of them before they retreated. The Indians could not make out the situation, and that night they crept through the grass and tried to kindle a fire beneath his wagon. Halfacre was alert, and shot them from the bottom loop holes. After two or three assaults, in which they lost many of their number, the Indians went away and ever afterwards avoided the place, as they believed it protected by evil spirits.

Halfacre lived in his wagon for more than a year, making incursions into the Indian camps at night, where his rifle dealt death.

To the Indians, he was an avenging spirit and they spoke of him in whispers. His remains were found some miles away, long afterwards by soldiers, who believed he had frozen to death in a blizzard. The rusted relic on the banks of the Platte River, slowly disappearing beneath the quicksands, was the only memento left of the tragedies there enacted.

IX.

CAPTURING WILD HORSES.

Lying upon the plain with his shoulder dislocated and his foot tangled up in a lariat, O. E. Kimsey held the head of his fallen horse close to the ground, in No Man's Land, for four hours, to prevent him from rising and dragging him to certain death.

We had gone to No Man's Land, now Beaver county, Oklahoma, in 1887, to capture wild mustangs, to be sold to the ranchmen of Kansas and Colorado. We had become separated in our search for them. Kimsey was far out on the plain when his horse stumbled into a coyote hole and as he fell beneath the horse his shoulder was dislocated. In a moment he realized that his foot was tangled in his lariat, which hung from the pommel of his saddle, with one end tightly fastened there. The horse attempted to rise, but to allow him to do so would mean being dragged to death.

Kimsey threw his uninjured arm over the horse's head and held him down. To call for help was useless in that barren and uninhabited plain, and he could do nothing else but hold the horse's head close to the ground. Night was coming on and he saw the hungry coyotes gathering. His strength was failing as the hours dragged by. He had almost lost all hope when he thought he heard the tramp of a horse's hoofs, and he shouted loud and long. He was right. I was in search of him and came to his rescue.

Our trip lasted five months, and in capturing the wild mustangs we followed a different plan from the Texas hunters. The latter pursued the horses night and day, using relays of mounts, until the horses were exhausted, when they were driven into a corral.

We had started early in the spring, in time to reach the wild horse country just as the first grass was covering the plains with green.

The mustangs were then gaunt and thin from the hardships of winter and the new grass was not nutritious enough to strengthen them quickly.

A boy kept camp for us while Kimsey and I

followed the horses. A spring wagon, under which we could sleep at night, was filled with provisions and grain. A dozen of the best saddle horses that could be found, that were selected for fleetness and endurance, were a part of the outfit. There was no hurrah and wild pursuit when the horses first came in sight. We rode toward them leisurely and took precautions to alarm them as little as possible. At first it was difficult to approach closer than three or four miles. Each band was led by a stallion that circled round and round. Sometimes there were three or four stallions with a band of twenty or thirty mares and their foals. Generally, however, each band consisted of five to a dozen mares and a stallion. The moment we appeared the horses would begin to move. If they were followed close they would break into a gallop, keeping on the ridges from which they could view the surrounding country.

I know of nothing more fascinating than a band of moving wild horses. Their manes and tails are quite long and add grace to their movements as they sweep along in the wind. At a distance a tenderfoot imagines a wild horse to be a majestic animal, large in size,

beautiful in color, clean of limb and fleet of foot. At close range they are a disappointment, especially in the spring when their coats are rough. They have great endurance, some of them being able to carry a man 70 miles between suns, and their recuperative power is wonderful.

We pursued the largest band we could find, but, use the best precaution we could, the horses would take fright at first and run for ten or twelve miles before stopping. We tried to keep in sight of them if possible, and always made it a point to be close to them at sundown, as they sought water, and if not disturbed would remain near the spot all night. If startled they would move, and before morning would be many miles away. They were on the move at the first streak of dawn. After we followed them two or three days the mustangs grew less wary, and we began teaching them to drive.

A characteristic of the wild horse is that if an attempt is made to ride to the right of them, for the purpose of turning them to the left, they will invariably bolt to the right, and run directly across the path of their pursuers.

It requires much time and patience to teach them to run in the opposite direction. We won our first point when we taught the horses to be driven. We then began driving them in a circle, which at first had a large circumference. As the horses grew weaker from want of rest and food, the circle grew smaller until its diameter did not exceed a quarter of a mile. Meantime, we were using relays of fresh horses. Then they were taught another lesson. A long lariat was stretched on the ground, and in the path of the horses. Wild mustangs are very sagacious and quick to suspect a trap. The rope always frightened them greatly at first, but in time they grew accustomed to it, and could be driven across it. We were now ready for business. The lariat was strongly anchored in the ground by tying it to a buried log. The best horses were now brought out and saddled. Riding as swiftly as possible, we started the wild horses moving in a circle and kept after them until our own horses were exhausted. The boy then took our place and maintained the swift pace, while we saddled fresh horses. Before a great while a colt would give out and drift, toward the center of the circle

where it would be joined by its mother.

A band of wild horses will not desert one another and there was no longer any fear that the running horses would bolt from the circle in which they were moving. In the free end of the lariat a big running noose had been tied. As the circle grew smaller the horses would begin running over the noose. The boy kept close watch and gave a strong pull on the lariat when he saw that a horse had stepped into the noose. The horse would fall, snared by the foot. A heavy log chain about three feet long was fastened to one of its forelegs with a leather and the horse turned loose. The animal would spring to its feet and start away at a breakneck speed, only to turn a somersault, caught by the swinging chain encircling its forelegs.

When half a dozen horses had been caught in this manner the others would begin shying away from the noose, which was then abandoned for the time being. Then we would coil our lariats and ride straight into the midst of the band and rope them until the band was scattered.

The captured horses were then rounded up, and the lesson of teaching the others to pass

over the rope was resumed. After a time, when their fear had abated, they would again pass over the rope without hesitancy. In this manner we caught one hundred and nine the first season. The work grew more difficult as the summer advanced; the grass was better, giving greater strength to the wild mustangs, while our own had become worn and thin with hard service. The captured horses soon became accustomed to being driven and herded and it was not difficult to move them across the plains to Kansas and Colorado, where they were sold. Kimsey usually selected the best ones and broke them to the saddle, an exciting and dangerous business.

Wild horses gave much trouble to ranchmen in those days. Tame horses are quick to follow wild ones away, but a wild horse never voluntarily forsakes the freedom of the plains for the corn fodder of the corral. The wild stallions are constantly seeking to increase their harem of mares. On the plains they do it through their ability as fighters and their superior generalship over weaker stallions. They resort to extreme violence in adding tame mares to their bands. I have

seen a wild stallion gallop up to a herd of domestic horses, select a mare, and then begin maneuvering to driver her away. Sometimes the mare is lying down and refuses to get up. The stallion throws back his ears and breaks for her at full speed. If she does not move he seizes her with his teeth and bites her so violently that she is glad to spring to her feet. Once moving, she is lost, as the stallion keeps close behind, biting and pawing at her until she is driven into his band, when all of them gallop away. In time they drive away many horses, and in the old days ranchmen often united and killed wild stallions as they killed wolves. The stallions are constantly fighting among themselves, but as a rule without great injury to each other. Domestic stallions fight to the death, but the wild ones seem to know when they are worsted and the weaker ones run away. There were usually about as many wild stallions as mares, and as each successful stallion had from six to a dozen mares, there were necessarily a number of stallions who were freebooters on the plains. These were mostly old stallions, grown weak with age, and young ones not old enough to win

their fights. I have seen as many as seventy-five such stallions in a band.

It was November when Kimsey and I sat in the Albany Hotel in Denver and divided almost $3,000 as the profits of our season's work.

"Where to now, Kimsey?" I asked. "I go to San Antonio for the winter; and you?" "To the C. C. Ranch, on the Cimarron," I replied.

X.

AN EXPEDITION THAT FAILED.

Five men sat about a table in an upper room of the Coates House in Kansas City. The names of several of them I omit, as they will sleep easier. Upon the table was a plate of shining gold nuggets of a value of $1,600. Charley Cole, the owner, was a miner from the northwest.

He had met the party the day before, and offered to show them where the nuggets came from for $2,000, saying his reason for so doing was that he wanted to clean up and go to the Transvaal, then the Mecca of the gold-seeker.

This incident was in June, 188—. Around that table a party was organized, but with the understanding that no money should be paid until the gold was found to our satisfaction, and with the further understanding that if Cole was deceiving us with the idea of lead-

ing us into a bandit trap to secure our money, he should be the first man shot.

To this he agreed and the next day the party was increased to six by a young doctor. Ten days later we were in Rawlins, Wyoming, where horses and a general outfit were purchased and the journey to the Wind River country in the Shoshone Indian reservation was begun.

July had come and the plains and valleys were beautiful in billowy green. Cole, always in the lead, headed west of Lander. There was nothing I could see about the man to indicate that he was other than he represented, although several of the party whispered suspicions as, day by day, we penetrated the wild and almost uninhabited country.

We entered the reservation at a point about thirty miles west of Lander, which town we had purposely avoided, not wishing to incite others to a gold hunt.

We broke camp and were riding down a beautiful valley one morning, when we came upon some antelope. I wounded one, and as it was getting away I spurred my horse after the antelope on the run. My horse stumbled into a badger hole, and the next thing I re-

member distinctly was the awful pain as the doctor of our party was setting my broken ankle.

My horse was also lame, but later in the day I made out to ride him five miles to the camp of some Shoshone Indians.

The pain in my limb was so great I could go no further, and as the Indians were friendly and hospitable, I begged to be left in their camp. A bed was made for me upon the ground in one of the tepees, and after giving me surgical attention, and leaving me such comforts as we carried, the party proceeded, at my request, for I knew it would be weeks before I could travel, and even then I would be a hindrance.

I felt secure from the kindly attention I had received from the Indians, who seemed desirous in many ways of alleviating my sufferings. Knowing that the Indian despises any manifestation of pain, I managed never to utter a groan, or show distress in my face, no matter how excruciating was Nature's process of healing.

After three or four days an Indian cut away the doctor's splints and bound my limb in a huge pack of wet clay. From that mo-

ment the pain grew less, and as I felt more like talking, the Indians would gather in the tepee and sit about like children. I made pictures to amuse them, taught them the game of mumbledy-peg, and in various ways won their simple affections.

The days had been dragging wearily, when the monotony was broken by an Indian wedding. Bright Eyes, a damsel of no exceeding beauty, was of that age when the consent of her father could be secured for her marriage for a consideration of ponies.

Several young bucks had been staking their ropes for the catch, each hoping he would be the fortunate one in securing her for a partner. Some of them had offered as high as nine ponies. But Wah-ne-a-tah, which means in English, "it is hurting him," came forward with a dozen ponies and secured the prize. A beef from the Agency had been secured and roasted, as well as other things good to the palate of a hungry Indian. At about 4 o'clock the bride was taken to a tepee set apart from the others, where some twenty squaw attendants dressed her out in a "rig" that for decoration resembled a general or an admiral's uniform.

Not wishing to get married at this time, she kept her attendants in tears by her lamentations. Some one in Lander had sold her father an old hearse as being just the thing for a family carriage. The top had been taken off, but the plumes remained, and into it she was loaded. The horses were gaily decorated and an Indian walked at the head of each horse. As she took her seat in the carriage, I obtained the first good view of the bride. A description of her dress is impossible, but it was a curious mixture of every color imaginable. She had proceeded but a little way down the valley, when at breakneck speed came a buck and three squaws who were running to the bride. The first squaw to reach the bride was to receive her raiment, the second a pony and the third a blanket. The bride was escorted to a tepee belonging to a relative of the groom. Here she was placed on a blanket and wrapped up until no part of her was visible and then carried to the tepee set apart for the happy couple. Arriving there she was unwrapped in the presence of the guests and her clothing immediately claimed by the spuaw who came out best in

the race. The bride was re-dressed, the groom summoned and seated on the blanket beside her. They were now married in the eyes of the Indians. Then came a feast, participated in only by the happy couple and the guests departed to the general feast.

Three weeks had passed when one day an officer of the indian police came to our camp and through him I learned of Cole's former camp on a tributary of Wind River, and he said the gulches and sands of the stream were plentifully besprinkled with nuggets, that the reason white men were not there in multitudes was they were kept away by the Indian police.

He said that Cole was permitted to stay because he furnished the Indians with whisky. This Cole doubtless made from drugs.

At the end of another week my party returned without Cole. They came hastily and seemed in a hurry to get away. I asked if they found gold. They replied, "Yes, plenty of it, but Cole's treachery has defeated every plan." Beyond this they would say nothing.

As I was in no condition to accompany them and was as comfortable as circum-

stances would permit, they left me in the Indian camp. Here I remained for a month longer, when Red Jacket and Spotted Horse rode with me to Rawlins. Two truer hearts I never expect to find among any race. I had our photographs taken and made them presents, as well as sending a flour sack of candies back to the camp. When our train rolled away they stood on the platform and watched us out of sight.

The mystery of the fate of Cole was cleared some years later when I called on one of the parties in Kansas City. It seems they reached Cole's cabin in the wilds of the Wind River country and that he showed them fine placer mines, and that after a few days he produced a vile decoction of whisky which he and a younger member of the party drank. A quarrel between the two men, crazed with the drink, ensued, in which Cole was killed.

XI.

ACROSS THE PALM DESERT.

An ancient fight—as ancient as the time dividing the bird from the serpent, a fight thousands of times repeated in the lonely places of the earth each year, but which man seldom sees, was witnessed by Mark Witherspoon and myself on the borders of the Palm Desert in California, where we had come in the search for gold. It was a struggle to the finish between an eagle and a big rattlesnake. Death was the referee, as he is in all the contests waged under nature's code of fang and claw.

There are two things men may not know, so it is said: "The way of the serpent upon the rock; the eagle soaring in the sky." Each has a wonderful power which man does not understand—does not understand any more than he does why they always fight when they meet and that they always should

and will, so long as there are serpents upon the rocks and eagles soaring in the sky. If there were no eagles, the rattlesnakes would have no enemy in the sky or upon the earth, save man, to fear. The eagle likewise has no fear of anything, unless it be the glistening yellow and brown poisonous creature of the rocks—the rattler.

Thus it lives forever—the death feud of the eagle of the Montezumas and the serpent father of the Moki's—the rattler.

How it began I did not see. I was standing near the top of a big stony crag that glistened in the bright light looking over the vast opens and great basins of the Palm Desert which we were to cross, when my attention was attracted by the flop of something striking the sands a hundred feet away. I could not see what it was, but a moment later I saw an eagle swoop down and rise slowly, holding within its mailed claws, a snake. The big bird soared up a hundred feet or more and shook the snake loose, which fell twisting and coiling with a distinctly audible "flop"—the noise that first attracted my attention. Again and again the bird swooped, arose with

Truer hearts I never expect to find (page 78).

the serpent and dropped it, while Witherspoon drew closer and closer to watch.

Then the eagle—a young one, as we could tell by its size and plumage—struck and failed to rise. Witherspoon was now close enough to see everything that happened.

The young bird had almost exhausted itself in its struggles with the snake, and may, too, have been bitten by it. At any rate, it was upon the sands, its wings slightly spread, as if from the heat—its mouth open. The snake was recovering from its jolting fall, and slowly gathering its coils.

It rested a moment in position, and then struck the eagle, the fangs entering the corner of the bird's mouth, in the soft tissues at the base of the beak.

The eagle recovered from the shock, stood motionless a few seconds, while the rattler watched as only a rattler can, and spreading out its wings, toppled over.

Then the man—man who hates serpents as the eagle does—put forth his hand, using a power more wonderful than that of either. There was a puff of white smoke in the clear air and the report of a pistol rang among the glistening wind-polished rocks, and the snake

was a mangled, bright, still thing that the ants began to gather about.

"It was unjust maybe," remarked Witherspoon. "The snake had won fairly—he was entitled to go his way, a terror for all the furry little bright things hereabouts." "But I couldn't help it." "Someway that slaying by poison, even if it is done in the open, doesn't seem fair." "Then, too, a man hates to see the emblem of his country's armies and navies, the triumphant eagle of thunderbolts, lying in the sunshine dead, and that by a serpent."

We had purchased a mustang in San Luis Obispo and loaded him with our stock of flour, bacon, frying pans, blankets, etc., and was resting on the borders of the Palm Desert, which we intended to cross the next morning, to the Mexican dry diggings, in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, when the battle between the eagle and rattler furnished the topic of conversation all the afternoon. From San Luis Obispo we had taken the trail that led over the mountains and through the beautiful Santa Margarita Valley. Of all the places I have ever seen, I think this valley came the nearest to being

an earthly paradise. It is seven miles in length, five in breadth, and is walled on all sides, except a narrow pass, by the lofty Santa Lucia Mountains. Through the center of the valley flows the headwaters of the Salanis River. Giant live oak trees studded the valley at almost regular intervals, as if they had been planted by the hand of man. The earth was a carpet of green verdure, with splashes of the yellow wild mustard and varied hues of the many different semi-tropical flowers. Two days after passing through this Eden, we began our toilsome march across an arm of the Palm Desert. When we reached the diggings we found a group of motley Mexicans, who good naturedly swarmed about us and showed us a camping place near a spring, but its waters were so impregnated with sulphates of magnesia and sodium, that we found it impossible to use it. We moved our camp about a mile further up the canyon, near the quarters of a sheep herder, where we found good water and were free from the Mexicans. They taught us, however, the art of dry washing the gold from the loose earth of the placer claim which we had staked off. Here, for more than three

months, we toiled. When our supplies run short, we sent for more by the man who came once a week to bring provisions and look after his interests on the sheep ranch. I always pitied that sheep herder. He had several hundred to care for, and their continual bleating sounded dismally in the solitude of the mountains, and when he lighted his bivouac fire at night, it always seemed like a signal of distress.

From the red earth we gathered the golden grains, and when the stars came out at night, and the mountains took on their shadowy gloom, we talked of home two thousand miles away, and often wondered at the enigma of creation. Then came a time when by exposure to the damp and dews, and living upon poor food, we both began to fall sick. Medicine was out of the question, and so with our precious packet of gold dust upon our persons, we loaded our mustang with our camp equipments and took up our march toward San Luis Obispo.

It was in the early dawn of the morning when we started across the arm of the Palm Desert. The sun rose like a ball of fire in a cloudless sky and heated the sands until they

parched and blistered our faces. By noon our water supply was exhausted, and soon after I threw away the Winchester which I carried, for I could no longer bear the burden. If it has not been found by some weary pilgrim it lies there today with its barrel as bright in that rainless valley as it was when I threw it down.

We walked in silence all that torrid afternoon. The poor mustang crept along, led by Mark, while we, with bloodshot eyes and fevered brains, could but feebly keep in sight the jutting mountain spur where we would find a haven of rest.

Exhausted, I sat down in the scant shade of a desert palm. Its sparse branches rattled in the hot wind like dried sunflower stalks, and then, in my imagination, I stood a few feet away and saw myself lying dead on the sands, with face drawn and withered and dead eyes staring at the skies.

I roused myself from the horrible dream and walked on. It was long after the sun had dipped beyond the mountain crest, and the Palm Desert was shrouded in the gloom of night, that we reached a pool of clear water, fed by a generous spring. We drank of its

waters and bathed our fevered brows, and lay down in the warm sands to awake ever and anon in fitful dreams. It seemed I was buried in the stone coffins of Egypt, where I lay for a thousand years in torrid heat, with unquenchable thirst. Whenever I awoke, I drew myself to the edge of the pool, drank deeply of its refreshing waters, and fell asleep again, repeating the same thing perhaps twenty times during the night.

How soon we forget our troubles, and oh, how soon we forget that we have passed through the valley of the shadow, and that a merciful God has watched over our destinies. Within a week after this, when Mark and I came so near perishing on the Palm Desert, we had purchased new summer clothes and were sitting about the best hotel in San Luis Obispo, smoking fine cigars and playing the part of high-toned young gentlemen generally.

XII.

THE LAST STAND OF A DYING RACE.

The battle of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, occurred December 29, 1890. It was the last stand of a dying race, the last Indian battle fought on the soil of the United States.

Whatever views I may have held at the time, and whatever part I may have taken in the engagement is mitigated by previous experiences and circumstances; but with time there comes a belief that somebody grievously erred.

Nearly every nation in its decline has looked for the coming of a Redeemer to lead them back to the glory and valor of former days. This has been especially true of the Indian races. The few remaining Aztec tribes yet look for the coming of Montezuma, while the Indians in the mountains of Peru believe that Huascar will again appear and re-establish the magnificent empire of which the mailed heels of a conquering Pizarro host

clanked the dying knell nearly four centuries ago.

In the autumn of 1890 there appeared in an Indian village in Nevada a man who was strange to them and to the neighboring tribes. He told them a wondrous story. He had come from a far-off land beyond the setting sun, and was sent by the Great Spirit to rescue the redmen from the oppression of the paleface, to restore to them their hunting grounds and to populate the plains once more with the buffalo and the antelope. He taught them a new form of the death dance and made a garment, decorated it with hieroglyphics and blessed it, and said that it would turn the bullets of the white man. They received his tale with great rejoicing and started immediately to carry the tidings to the tribes on the plains to the east. Great enthusiasm among the Indians marked the progress of the march across the country, and when he reached the Rosebud Agency in South Dakota, so exaggerated were the wondrous stories that preceded him, he was fairly worshipped as a deity. Chiefs Red Cloud, Crow Dog and Two Strikes brought him be-

Battlefield at Wounded Knee (page 87).

fore the Great Council at Pine Ridge Agency, some fifty miles distant from Rosebud.

For more than three months after his arrival thousands of the Sioux warriors kept up the ghost dance almost nightly. The quantities of unbleached domestic that they were purchasing at the agency stores and making up into "ghost shirts," together with the ammunition they were known to be hoarding convinced the agency authorities at Pine Ridge that an outbreak was imminent. A call was made for United States troops, but before any considerable number arrived hostilities had begun. A cattle herder was killed and a large herd of cattle belonging to the government was driven into the bad-lands. The same night Chief Red Cloud, who had become almost blind in his extreme old age, was taken forcibly from his home near the Pine Ridge agency building and made to lead the hostile attack on the Jesuit Mission some four miles distant. A desultory firing was kept up on the agency for some nights afterward, when a reinforcement of troops arrived and the hostiles withdrew to the natural fortresses of the bad-lands.

Chief American Horse appears to have

doubted the divine origin of the Indian Messiah, and held in check some six or seven thousand of his people encamped on a creek near the agency. In the meantime General Miles arrived with a strong force of cavalry and artillery. Batteries were trained on the tepees of the Brule Sioux under American Horse, and they were ordered not to congregate, which order was respected up to the close of the campaign.

Rumors of Indian depredations were of every day occurrence. Settlers were fleeing from their homes and seeking refuge in the villages. So great was the terror in northwestern Nebraska that General John M. Thayer, then governor, ordered out the entire force of the National Guard, numbering about two thousand men, under Brigadier General Leonard W. Colby, to protect the Nebraska frontier.

The main body of hostiles was safely intrenched in the bad lands and was only awaiting the springtime, when grass would furnish provender for their ponies; when they intended to begin their work of destruction on the white settlements.

Up to this time no Indian had been killed

or wounded, although there was some heavy firing done in defense of the mission and the agency. This fact tended to strengthen their belief in the invulnerability of the ghost shirt which, by this time, was worn by all the warriors. So great was their faith in the efficacy of this garment to turn the bullets of their white foe, that Big Foot and a band of about four hundred ventured to leave the stronghold and commit some petty depredations within thirty miles of Pine Ridge.

General Miles promptly dispatched Colonel Forsythe and a troop of two companies of the Seventh Cavalry to subdue them. It will be remembered that the Seventh was General Custer's old regiment that met the Indians on the Little Big Horn on that memorable 25th of June, 1876, when every man taking part in the engagement was massacred by this *same tribe of Sioux Indians* which this detachment under Colonel Forsythe was seeking. On the evening of the twenty-eighth of December, Colonel Forsythe came upon Big Foot's band. No resistance was offered at the time, although the demeanor of the braves foreboded the terrible tragedy soon to follow. The Indians were escorted some miles distant

and ordered to go into camp on the banks of Wounded Knee Creek, which flows through a wide, open valley skirted for miles on either side by high, sandy bluffs and scant growth of fir, cedar and pine. The Indians were made to pitch their tepees in a semi-circle and park their wagons and ponies behind them. The soldiers formed in a triangle in front of the semi-circle with a Hotchkiss gun under command of Sergeant Wingate in the center of the triangle. The men stood by their guns throughout the bitter cold of the Dakota night, while the Indians were comfortably wrapped in their blankets within the shelter of the tepees. As the first rays of the sun were slanting across the bleak and cheerless plain, the shrill notes of a bugle rang out on the frosty air. It was the signal to arouse the Indian camp. They came from their tepees with blankets swathed about them, and desperation was stamped upon their faces. Big Foot, who was ill with pneumonia, was first carried out and laid upon a bed of fur in front of his tepee, and then two hundred and fifty braves seated themselves in rows about him. Through an interpreter they were ordered by Captain Wallace to lay down

their arms. They were armed mostly with Winchesters which were concealed beneath the blankets about them. Suddenly the medicine man of the tribe sprang to his feet and threw a handful of dirt into the air. It was a signal, and in another instant the death-like shrieks—the Sioux war-cry, "Hi-yi-hip-yi!" echoed up and down the valley, and the blaze of two hundred Winchesters sent their deadly missiles into the faces of the soldiers not over thirty feet away. There was an instant of hush—then a crash of musketry, and the last Sioux Indian battle was on! There were wavering ranks of blue as men fell to the ground wounded or dying; frantic horses dashed riderless over the plain; forms in red blankets were running hither and thither as the deadly triangle poured a withering cross-fire into the struggling mass about the tepees. There were swift retreats of small parties, followed by swifter pursuit of horsemen. Indians were shot right and left as the mellow cadence of the bugle said, "Fire at will." Squaws were dashing right and left, attempting to stab the soldiers with their long, copper-handled scalping knives; boys kneeled on the ground and coolly fired rifles

at the soldiers. They, too, were shot, and meanwhile the terrible Hotchkiss gun boomed death. Small fleeing parties gained the sand bluffs and shot the pursuing soldiers. A wagon, drawn by two ponies and loaded with bucks and squaws who were trying to get away, was struck by a six-inch shell and literally blown to pieces. Brave Captain Wallace was killed with a blow from a stone battle-ax as he was entering a tepee.

The field of carnage is a dreadful sight. The mind shrinks from contemplating it. Human life has there passed away. Agony and suffering is everywhere. Gloom is on men's faces and dark frowns on their brows. One wishes it were effaced from memory, for in years to come one must see in fancy and hear again in fitful slumber the dying shrieks and piteous cries of agony.

That evening the sun set behind a bank of crimson clouds. Sickening odors came from the smouldering tepees. Stark faces, stiffening in death, were turned to the skies. There, too, were the wounded with the dew of death already upon their brows. Strong lines were drawn upon the faces of the dead that told of the awful desperation of the soul at the mo-

ment they fell. Weapons were clutched in pulseless hands, and piteous was the sight of the struggling, wounded horses in their vain attempt to join their mates in the wild chase among the hills. Amid these scenes could be heard the prattle of childish voices about the Indian tepees. In the tenderness of their years and the savagery of their nature they were unable to comprehend the awfulness of the hour. When darkness came over the scene like a pall, the booming gun had ceased, but the plains were aglow with the lurid fires in the high grass—a weird and fantastic scene. Two hours later and the crimson clouds, which at sunset had portended evil, burst into fury, and a blizzard, with icy winds and drifting snows, raged as if to aid the soldiers in their determination that no living thing should survive the day.

When, four days later, the winds had spent their fury, and General Colby was riding over the field with his party, a cry was heard from a snow-bank that covered the dead bodies of some squaws. A soldier dismounted and found an Indian pappoose tied to its dead mother's back, and clasped in the child's arms was a soiled, little rag doll which the

baby fought to retain. General Colby immediately had the little waif cared for and afterwards adopted her. The Indians named her "Ziutka Lanuni," which in the white man's tongue means "Lost Bird." She is now living at the home of Mrs. L. W. Colby in Washington, D. C., a beautiful Indian girl, well educated, speaking the tongue of the white man, for she never had the opportunity to learn the language of her people.

A few days after the battle the great Sioux chief, Sitting Bull, was slain by the Indian police. The news of the battle spread among the hostile Indians. They learned that the much prized ghost shirt was no protection against the white man's bullets, and the closing scene of this drama occurred some weeks later when the hills about Pine Ridge agency fairly swarmed with returning hostiles.

No conquered general in the history of the world ever met the conqueror with haughtier mien than did Two Strikes, the untutored savage, chief of the hostile band, when he made his formal surrender to General Miles. Followed by half a dozen lesser chiefs, he strode majestically toward the agency school building in front of which stood General

After the Blizzard at Wounded Knee (page 95).

Miles and aides waiting to receive him. His magnificent form was erect, his head, proudly decked with the eagle feather, was thrown slightly back, while every muscle of his face was as tense as steel. His warrior robes were draped about his shoulders, while his arms were folded across a carbine upon his breast. With measured tread he approached and halted in front of General Miles and met the mild blue eye of that warrior with black, piercing eyes that fairly blazed fire. Steadily the two men gazed at each other for more than a minute. The muscles of the Indian's face twitched and the proud lips essayed to speak—as though he would hurl a torrent of defiance and hatred into the conqueror's face. With one swift movement he laid the carbine at the general's feet, stood erect another instant gazing with defiant eyes—and strode away to join his people.

XIII.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE LOST MINE.

In 1879, Capt. Charles Watt and Irwin Baker built a cabin in a gulch some miles distant from where Cripple Creek now stands. Baker had in his possession samples of very rich gold-bearing ore which he claimed to have brought from Arizona, where he and a Mexican had been driven out by Indians, as their reservation at that time extended over that region of country. The Mexican afterwards died of wounds received in the fight, and Baker was the sole possessor of the secret of the mine. He would sit for hours and tell how they had dug the white quartz which was threaded and beaded with strings of gold, and hoarded vast quantities of it under a great shelving rock which bore evidence of having at one time been the home of the Cliff Dwellers. And how he had carefully made a map of the country and intended when the Indian troubles were over to hire

a sufficient force of men and burros to go there and bring away enough of the treasure to fix him in comfortable circumstances for the rest of his life. He often spoke of the map which he kept carefully concealed among his effects, which consisted of a valise and some mining tools.

In the fall of 1879 Baker concluded to make a trip to Leadville, which was then in the height of prosperity, and taking his rifle, blankets, and a few days' rations, set out on foot. He reached Leadville safely, and a few days later died of pneumonia. As no one claimed the few chattels, including the valise, which Baker left behind, Captain Watt as a matter of course took them. He searched everywhere for the map by which Baker set so much store, and not finding it, concluded it was concealed about his clothing and had been doubtless buried with him. And so years passed on, but the straight story the man had so often told around the cabin fire in the silence of night, was never forgotten by Watt, who, in the lonely hours among the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains, had thought of it a thousand times.

But one day, the hand of Fate and Chance took a part.

Captain Watt needed a strip of leather. There was none to be found. Finally, his eye rested upon the old valise which had once been the property of Irwin Baker, which had tumbled about prospectors' cabins for the last ten years. It was worn out, but the sides would make the strip of leather the captain wanted. The first slash of his knife revealed between the outside and the lining a folded sheet of paper, yellowed with age, and a closer examination proved it to be the carefully prepared map which Irwin Baker had concealed ten years before. The lines were drawn with the skill of a civil engineer, and the places so plainly marked that a party instantly formed, believed they would have no difficulty in going straight to the lost mine.

Three others, myself and Captain Baker staked our time and money on the venture, and another month found us in the country called Coconino in Arizona through which the Colorado River crosses with many a curve and twist. It lies in the northern part of the great Colorado plateau and west of the Moqui country.

John Bowden, a young civil engineer, was one of our party. He had studied at Ann Arbor and also at the University of Minnesota. His field work covered about five years prior to joining us. He was not familiar with the Southwest, its climate and peculiar topography, but others of the party were, and in view of his knowledge of civil engineering he was considered a valuable man to us.

The sun shines in Coconino. It hangs day after day above Lava Butte, the Painted Desert, Shinumo Altar, and the Black Falls, as if it were a destroying angel, not the kindly orb that flashes in the northern belt, but a consuming, terrifying demon of the desert wastes from which there is no escape. Those who toil in the city's ways think the sun is hot, that the humidity is deadly, that pain such as theirs is unknown. They have never looked up to the solar star from the buttes of Coconino. There, blazing through the century-dried air all that is inhuman in stellar heat feeds upon the brain, the senses of man, until he staggers over the sands and falls to death.

Our party had made its way north of Mesa Butte, carrying provisions and water, mak-

ing slow progress, enduring extraordinary discomforts. It was after we had camped at the Little Colorado on the south bank, that Bowden and I, acting upon the advice of Captain Watt, made some advance explorations to determine how best we should approach Lava Butte, which, according to Baker's map, was the key to the route to the lost mine.

We left one morning before sunrise and headed due north for the Painted Desert. We carried with our horses a two days' supply of water and provisions. It was impossible after ten o'clock in the morning to advance farther in the heat. We camped in the swale of a dry arroya, making such shade as we could, and waited for the coming of the late afternoon, when we might press on a little more. Bowden attempted some observations, but found that his sight was affected and that he must rest. In the evening and before we halted for the night, Lava Butte was in sight. After supper, Bowden said he would walk a distance under the stars; and that he would return to the camp within an hour.

He had not returned by midnight, and I dared not leave the horses and search for

him, but I fired my rifle as a signal at short intervals throughout the night. The next day I tried to find him, firing my rifle now and then, until I had burned the last cartridge, and then I made a fire of dried cactus stalks, in hopes that the smoke would attract his attention, but all this failed. The water supply began to run short, the horses were suffering, and Bowden did not appear. I then headed back for camp on the Little Colorado, intending to follow our trail in the sands, but the hot winds had swept over the desert and obliterated most of them. I had depended upon Bowden's qualities as an engineer and had not taken as close an observation as I would otherwise. However, I remembered my experience in the Palm Desert of years before, and so urged my horse along through the torrid heat, always heading for a jutting butte where I thought our camp to be. At noon my horse died, and I lay in the shade of some rocks, giving myself up for lost, when, as the sun was going down and the shadows were creeping over the desert, I descried the relief party from our camp that was searching for us.

Bowden's body was found five miles from

the camp he and I had made. He had walked in the night through the dead land, where, in starlight or sunlight, all things look alike. But there is so much white and so much grey, that to distinguish one object from another, to remember it, to say, "I will come back to this," is not possible. So when Bowden started to retrace his steps, he did not know where he was. The plain was all north, south, east and west.

He quite evidently had sat down and tried to collect his thoughts, for there were marks in the waste indicating the various positions he had taken. He had a small bottle of water with him, but no food.

No sound swept the plain. Bowden may have thought he was entombed in some vast charnel-house of the ages to which Time had brought Nature's remains and left them without burial. He was on the crest of one-time vast lava beds, a spot where fearful fires once raged beneath his feet. Here the last great battle of the peaks of the continent had probably been fought with thunderbolt and flame hurled from the bowels of the earth. And he was alone. Not even the wretched lizards of the lava region were

moving. He called. No voice answered. He walked, but it was in a circle, and he came back time and time again to his starting point. He waited for the dawn—one hope that the sun's light might give him a trace of the camp. He saw the shade of the night grow deeper and deeper, and then the driving of this blackness back from the east and the coming there of a cold line of grey and then an insolent one of red and a savage yellow with that, and then, with one leap, the sun.

He must have scanned the plain, but there was no sight of camp. He called, he laughed, he cried. He drank his water to the last drop in the little bottle. He walked and ran. He returned to the spot where he had first become bewildered. He was hot and then cold, and the sun rose higher and higher; grew more pitiless with every advance. The white heat beat down on him; it rose in sheets before him. Now the lizzards and the mean, creeping things came out, but they passed him by. They could wait. Others had preceded him. After a long time, Bowden threw his hands high in the air, far up to the sun god that was calling to him, although beating him down. He fell flat on his face, and there

he slept his last sleep in the land where the sun shines forever and forever.

A week later and Captain Watt died of gastritis, and our party returned to Flagstaff and abandoned the search for the lost mine.

XIV.

THE LAND OF THE FAIR GOD.

Captain David L. Payne was a born frontiersman. He left his home in Grant County, Indiana, in 1856, at the age of 20 years. He started west to fight the Mormons, and got as far as Doniphan County, Kansas. Here he found plenty of excitement and joined the Free Soil party. Five years later, when the border was aflame with fire and steel, he was among the first to enlist in the Union army. He served with distinction throughout the war. In 1865 he was honorably discharged at Ft. Leavenworth, with the rank of major. After this he went to Pueblo de Taos, New Mexico, and joined a party under Kit Carson, in an expedition against the Apaches. And after this he was known as the "Cimarron Scout."

I first met him in the Black Hills in 1876, He was then talking of Oklahoma, called by the Indians The Land of the Fair God. He

claimed that the government had no title to the land. The next I noticed of him was in 1880, when he organized a band of raiders to invade Oklahoma and open it for settlement. His first company was thirteen strong. They went as far south as Fort Russell, on the Cimarron, leaving Arkansas City, April 30. They were captured and taken out by United States soldiers. But the brave pioneer was not to be daunted. His followers increased and they hovered upon the banks of the Arkansas River, awaiting the action of a dilatory congress at Washington until the country was thrown open to settlement, April 22, 1889.

Payne was like many other pioneers. He saw the land of promise, but dared not enter therein and live. Fate reserved this boon for others, while death decreed the brave soul should explore another bourne than this. While sitting at a breakfast table in Wellington, Kansas, December, 1884, he suddenly expired. Others may have felt as much interest in the opening of Oklahoma as Payne, but certainly none others devoted so much time and energy to the accomplishment of this work as he. He began the movement at

a time when it was very unpopular, hence was the object of much unfavorable criticism and abuse, but he did not allow this to daunt him, and continued to surround himself with a class of followers who had the nerve to stand for the right.

On the opening day the people came. They represented every part of the Union—from the granite hills of Maine to the flowery borders of California, and from the northern lakes to the gulf. They formed one of the most cosmopolitan communities ever assembled in the United States, and as if by common consent all sectional prejudices were laid aside in one common interest of beginning life anew. When the shadows of night fell around and about them on that memorable day, Guthrie, the territorial capital, was a tented city. The rush for lands and lots was over; and men sat quietly about their bivouac fires discussing the exciting events of the day. It was a triumph for American manhood and education; that the day passed off peaceably, and a triumph for which Oklahomans may well feel proud when the turbulence of the times are considered. Practically there was no law save that administered

by the United States military, until the organic act was effected, May 2, 1890, when Geo. W. Steele was appointed governor.

At the first session of the Territorial Legislature, a bill was introduced to remove the capital to Oklahoma City. When it was about to be placed upon its passage Arthur Daniels, the Speaker of the House, seized the bill and started on a run for the Santa Fe depot, where a special engine was waiting. Nearly all the members of the legislature started in pursuit, firing their revolvers at the fleeing speaker. He safely eluded them; and as the term of the legislature expired by law that night, the capital was saved to Guthrie.

Hammers and saws could be heard night and day. Men were building a city. In an incredible short space of time, palatial residences, business blocks and church spires rose upon what, a short time since, had ben a barren plain. They had added another dot on the map.

The administration of Governor Steele was soon followed by the appointment of Governor A. J. Seay, an heroic figure on the federal side during the war of the rebellion, an able and kindly man whom history will

revere. He was just the man for the times, for he always had a pleasant word or sound advice when occasion offered. He had the happy faculty of always looking at the bright side of life, and when speaking invariably put his audience in a good humor, as at the close of his term of office, in an address he said he always took an interest in the scriptural saying, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The crowd saw the point and gave a cheer for the retiring old hero so beloved by all.

About this time E. D. Nix was appointed United States marshal of the Territory. To Marshal Nix and his faithful deputies belong the credit of the suppression of outlawry in Oklahoma. At the time he was appointed in May, 1903, the country was overrun by a banditti that rivaled the noted James and Younger brothers, in Missouri. There was no safety for life or property outside the larger towns. Trains were held up, banks were looted, stores robbed, and travelers were murdered upon the highway.

To the young marshal, then only thirty years of age, it meant a long and bitter fight ahead, costing the lives of ninety-one deputy

marshals, and over one and one-half million dollars to the government.

It was a fight to the death, but the young marshal was equal to the emergency, and the emergency confronted him. One by one the desperate bands were either captured or went down beneath the unerring aim of the faithful deputies; who were all skilled frontiersmen.

These men were inured to hardships, many had been on the cattle trails, and had burned cartridges in more than one Indian fight, some had been marshals of Abilene, Dodge City and other frontier towns in their days of lawlessness.

The time will come when men will paint them, write verses about them, as they deserve to be written about. These men who bared their breasts to outlaw's bullets, as did deputies Bill Tighlman, W. W. Painter, John Hixon, Heck Thomas, Ed Kelley, Chris Madson, Wm. Banks, Frank Canton, John Hale, Frank Rhinehart and many others and to the heroic dead, such as Tom Houston, Lafe Shadley, Dick Speed, Jim Masterson and nearly a hundred others who fell as nobly as any soldier upon the battlefield in country's

Chief Big Foot (page 91).

cause, for it was in country's cause in which they fell. The graves of these dead heroes should be decorated, as they will be in time when Oklahomans stop long enough in their monied pursuits to give thought to services rendered by these noble lives.

A bushwhacking war was waged by the outlaws for more than three years. As soon as one leader bit the dust there was another to take his place. They were in bands of from ten to twenty and had their rendezvous in the dark forests of the Chickasaw Indian nation, the Grand River hills of the Osage Indian country or the Glass Mountains in the extreme west of Oklahoma. Often they would meet at a given point, do some daring act of train robbery, then scatter like quails with an agreed place of meeting; perhaps a hundred and fifty miles away. They were like the Insurgents of Cuba. No organized force could reach them. They knew every bridle path in the woods, or trail on the plains. Nothing prevailed but an Indian mode of warfare; but by long perseverance Marshal Nix's force conquered.

Bill Dalton was killed, Bill Doolin, Arkansan Tom, Tulsa Jack, George Newcomb, and

Buck Weightman, alias, "Red Rock," all noted outlaw leaders in time bit the dust, while Bill Raidler fell "bleeding at every pore" from a shotgun in the hands of Marshal Heck Thomas.

Tearing open his shirt and looking at his bleeding breast as full of small holes as the lid of a pepper box, Raidler exclaimed, "Heck you damned scoundrel, haven't you any more respect for me; than to shoot me with bird shot," "Only used them for packing, my dear boy, only packing, you will find plenty of buck shot among them," said Heck, as he slipped the cold steel cuffs on Raidler's wrists.

XV.

OUTLAWRY IN OKLAHOMA.

Bill Doolin, noted outlaw, was in the United States jail in Guthrie, Oklahoma. A chill, drizzling rain was falling and the night was dark. The half breed Indians and white border ruffians who had been his companions in the jail for the last two months, had grown tired of their card playing and had sullenly slunk off to their dirty bunks. Doolin had a cell of his own, but it had not yet been locked for the night and he had the freedom of the "bull pen." Near the front of the large room was a partition of steel bars. Outside this partition was a stove, near which a deputy marshal sat reading a novel. Another deputy was pacing the floor. Doolin was thinking of a night like this when he and his men lay in waiting at Red Rock for the Santa Fe express. How the chill rain dripped from their broad hats as they held a final whispered conversation just before the glaring eye

of the headlight of the express flashed on them for an instant as the train rounded a curve, then the shrill whistle. How he blessed the dark night, and how he cursed the mud, for it would leave a trail, easy for the deputy marshals to follow.

It was action now, the panting engine had stopped at the water tank, the fireman had drawn down the great nozzle of the water pipe and was filling his tender. He struck the signal match across the butt of his revolver. Another instant and his men was swarming over the tender with revolvers at the heads of engineer and fireman. No time to lose. Uncouple the express car. All aboard, and the frightened engineer is compelled to run his engine five miles farther on and slow up at a creek crossing, where there are other men and horses. A demand is made of the express messenger to open his car, his answer is a bullet through the door. Then Raidler crawls under the car and begins sending winchester bullets through the bottom of the car at random. One of the bullets strikes the brave messenger in the head. They hear him fall with a groan. Quick, the dynamite, an explosion and the

door of the express car is blown open. The pockets of the dead messenger are rifled, the key to the Wells-Fargo express box is found and next the iron chest is open. No time to count the big packages of currency and sealed bags of gold now. To the horses, and then to the Glass Mountains. For this and other crimes, death or imprisonment for life now awaited him. Oh, why did he let Bill Tightman take him single handed at Eureka Springs where he thought he was safe in masquerading as an honest farmer from Texas.

A sudden pause in his thoughts, an idea struck Doolin, people knew they had gotten over $100,000 from the express company, and that money ought to be somewhere.

Doolin took a card from his pocket and a pencil and drew a map. Walking over to the iron grating he motioned to the guard.

"My heart hurts me tonight," he said, "and I am afraid I am going to die." I wouldn't mind all this so much if it wasn't for my boy with his mother over in the Osage nation, but I hate to see that boy go the way I have. If I could find a good man I'd make him my boys' guardian and fix him for life."

The guard stopped and came over to the iron grating.

"It is like this," continued Doolin. "I have got $30,000 in gold for some good man who will bring that boy up in the way he should go and be a father to him, get him interested in some profession, and make a man of him. I am done for sure and I believe I am going to die tonight, oh, how my heart hurts, why not you get my money and be a father to my boy, I believe you would do the honest thing by him, then I could die easier."

The guard looked over at his companion to see if he had heard. No, he was still reading the novel. He looked at Doolin and nodded. Then he drew close to the iron bars.

Doolin whispered, "I will trust you," and drew from his pocket the card on which he had drawn a map.

"Now stand close," he said, "and see if you can understand this,—here is the Bear Creek road in Pawnee county, here the ford, here a rock, ten feet to the south of this rock dig three feet and there is $30,000."

The guard did not quite understand and drew closer to the bars and took the card.

While he was waiting, a long thin hand reached through the grating to the handle of his six shooter and in a second he was peering down the muzzle of his own revolver in the hands of Bill Doolin.

"Keep perfectly quiet," said the outlaw, you know me, open that bull pen door very quietly,"

The guard silently obeyed. "Step in," said Doolin, the guard stepped inside. The next thing and he with the novel was staring into the quick blue eye of Doolin and the ugly thing he held cocked in his hand.

"This way boys," said Doolin, and the two guards followed him to his cell. When they were inside he locked the door, then he called for their cartridge belts and the revolver, which he with the novel still had about him.

In five minutes he was inside a heavy rain coat, had the guards' midnight lunches stored in its pockets, a heavy winchester in his hands and a hundred rounds of ammunition belted about him. Out into the night, and on to the street where some belated revelers' horses were tied. He gathered up the reins of a

fleet mustang and mounting into the saddle—"Richard was himself again."

* * * * * *

For two years, I had been in the government secret service. I had no visible means of support except that of a newspaper correspondent. My reports for Marshal Nix's office always went by a circuitous route, lest I be discovered, to have had my business known would have meant death. Even Marshal Nix never knew the real source of much information which reached his office.

I thought the outlaws were making a rendezvous at the little town of Ingrim, and I determined to see for myself. Going to the office of the Daily Leader, I secured a job at very poor pay to write up some towns in Oklahoma. Suddenly, under pretext of an affection in the head I became quite deaf. I knew better than go to the town of Ingrim first, lest I might excite suspicion. So I began at Tecumseh some thirty miles from Ingrim. I stayed in the town a week, solicited subscriptions and wrote up the prospects of the place, said many flattering things of the business men in my write-up, and when the papers came, I distributed them. The people were

pleased with my work, but some complained at having to talk so loud to make me understand.

When I finished with Tecumseh, I rode with the mail carrier over to Ingrim. Sure enough here were my outlaws. They loafed about the only hotel and saloon, but were always on the alert. I appeared to take no notice of anything, but kept boreing people to subscribe for my paper, interviewing merchants and writing up the town. The merchants, I discovered were glad to have the outlaws there, for they spent money like water, they paid big prices for their cartridges and bought heavy supplies of canned goods, which they sent away to be cached in the woods and hills for a time of need.

One day I was sitting alone on the hotel veranda reading, when I heard a man say to another, "I am going to see if that dam cuss is deaf or not." I heard his cat like step approaching, and then, click, click, he cocked his revolver at the back of my head.

It was a trying moment, but I did not move, I did not dare to, for had I quickly turned my head, I would have betrayed myself and lost my life.

When he was satisfied that I was deaf as a door nail, he invited me to drink. I excused myself, and I heard him tell the other man that I did not have the sense of a muskrat.

When I left town I owed the hotel man for my last days board, which I promised to send to him, I did this for effect, and went in an opposite direction from Guthrie.

Three days later and two emigrant wagons with farmer like men driving the teams came down the long red road that leads from the north into Ingrim.

An outlaw outrider saw them and rode casually down the road. He engaged the driver of the first wagon in conversation a moment, and riding to the side of the wagon he lifted the edge of the cover with his rifle, and there saw six armed deputy marshals on the hay inside. The outlaw wheeled his horse and rode furiously back to the village, waving his broad white hat as a signal.

The marshals hurried from the wagons and the battle was on.

Twenty minutes of sharp fighting and the outlaws were fleeing from the town on swift horses leaving one of their wounded behind, while the wagons that brought the marshals,

carried four of their number back to Guthrie dead.

Almost at the same hour that afternoon, another tragedy was being enacted in the dark forests of the Osage Indian Nation. Deputy Heck Thomas had tracked Bill Doolin to his lair. He was sleeping under a rude shelter of branches in the forest, when the breaking of a twig awoke him. He saw Heck Thomas alone; not fifty feet away, and knew it was a duel to the death.

Leaping behind a barricade of logs he opened fire on Thomas who had sought the shelter of a tree. The duel lasted an hour, each jeering the other. Thomas held his hat to one side of the tree and when Doolin sent a bullet through it, he sank apparently helpless to the ground. A long silence followed. Doolin again jeered the marshal. There was no answer. He came from behind his barricade to see the effect of his shot, and received a bullet through the brain.

It is worthy of mention here that when a company of Rough Riders for the Spanish war was organized in Oklahoma, a son of Marshal Tilghlman and a son of Heck

Thomas were among the first to enlist, and afterwards stormed the heights of San Juan hill with Colonel Roosevelt.

XVI.

A NEW LAND OF CANAAN.

It was September of 1893. The Cherokee Strip, a large area of country in the Indian Territory, was about to be offered for settlement.

Guthrie, Oklahoma, was at this time filled with homeseekers who were camped about on vacant lots, in their wagons. They were men of good intentions. There was also a horde of gamblers and petty thieves who swarmed like ravening wolves scenting their prey. Saloons and gambling houses were open day and night, and many a poor fellow fell into the hands of these legalized bandits—to awaken from the effects of drugged liquor and find themselves robbed of every dollar they possessed, and their families without a day's provisions ahead.

Never was there an American town where morals were at a lower ebb than Guthrie was at that time. Street quarrels were frequent,

and men shot each other down in cold blood for trivial offenses. There were contests over claims in Oklahoma proper, and it was no uncommon thing for a witness to be shot down after he had finished testifying in the land office. Or perhaps he was called to his door at midnight to stop a bullet, or was shot through a window while sitting at home with his family.

Highway robbery, burglary, thieving, perjury, gambling and whisky-drinking ran riot. Courtesans and harlots, with painted faces and tinseled dresses, plied their arts of conquest in open day; while city officials, not to be outdone in the practices of the hour, took all manner of bribes from all manner of men. This state of immorality generated a stench over the town that all the perfume of Arabia the Blest could not sweeten.

The Dalton gang of bandits was robbing Santa Fe trains in the Cherokee Strip, while more than one hundred and fifty United States marshals were searching for outlaws. When one was found, however, he was usually shot first and the warrant for his arrest read to the corpse.

The men assembled at Guthrie at this time

were from all quarters of the United States, and represented almost every nationality. As one rider dashed up the street on a very fine horse, a gust of wind lifted his sombrero and landed it near where I stood. I picked it up and was in the act of handing it to him when he exclaimed: "Hello, Bob, you here!"

"Yes," I replied, scanning his face for an instant before recognizing him. Then the face came back to me with pleasant memories. He was my old friend—Mark Witherspoon. The reunion was, indeed, pleasant to both of us, and it was late that night before we retired to our respective abodes.

Mark had jostled about from pillar to post, in all parts of the world; he had been in the mining camps of Australia and on the Rand in South Africa; he had grown rich several times and lost all again and again, and now he wanted an Oklahoma farm where, he concluded, he would settle down and live quietly. Just as though wild and impulsive natures like his could ever be content with a simple farming life. We agreed to make the run together and, if possible locate our farms beside each other.

When the opening day came, a blazing

southern sun beat down upon the heads of more than one hundred thousand men drawn upon the line that marked the border of the new El Dorado. Most of the country on the southern border lay in high ridges, or in valleys and deep ravines, which, in some places, were 100 feet in depth, with precipitous ledges of rock on either side. The country was but sparsely covered with timber and nearly void of water at this season of the year. The few streams were impregnated with a mineral poison which had an evil effect for a long time on the systems of those who drank the water. Yet these men—many of whom had pioneered the plains of Nebraska and Kansas—were forced, by the conditions of the times, to seek new homes in this wild waste. For more than a year, more than 20,000 families had lived like rats in dugouts along the banks of the Arkansas River, to the north. To say they lived is a mistake—they only existed. Parched corn and potatoes comprised the daily diet of hundreds. The winter of 1892 had been unusually severe for that section, and scant clothing and a lack of fuel added to the bitter suffering, while innumerable mounds of yellow earth stood silent

monuments to those who braved the vicissitudes of the frontier in the hope of gaining homes.

In this new promised land there were some seventy Indian allotments to be made. These were located by government officials near townsites, for personal selfish purposes.

Then came an order from the Secretary of the Interior that all who would file on lands must register. That caused men to form in ranks miles long, to await their turn to register. It caused delay, and filled the pockets of government officials who, for pay, gave preference to the men of money. For days these men stood in line—a blazing sun above, and treeless, waterless plains about. Many sickened and were carried away to die, and, when the merciful night came, the others lay down on the bare, hard ground, to dream of happy homes—and shiver in the chill autumn darkness. The towns were platted by government employes. These plats contained false reservations for parks, and were sold to the men in line at a dollar each.

When we reached the line, a mighty caravan was there waiting, stretching as far as the eye could see, east and west, to the dim

horizon on either side. Men were there with their families; in white covered wagons, in light running rigs and on horseback. Among them were the broad-hatted, swarthy fellows from the pampas and chapparalls of Texas. They were there from the deserts of New Mexico and Arizona. Old soldiers in the tattered blue of the Grand Army of the Republic were among the strugglers for homes. Just in front of all was another line, composed of the troops who were there to see that all kept back of the starting mark until the signal should be given. The gleam of the rifle could be seen in both lines. It was a thrilling scene; one upon which no man could look without mingled feelings of admiration and pity.

The signal for many to start to the eternal promised land came as the weary hours wore along. Worn with fatigue and exposure, and fainting from sunstroke and thirst, many fell from frantic horses that went dashing riderless over the plains. An officer rode down the line and halted near the railroad tracks. It was near noon, and an eager man took the action as a signal. There was a flash, a report. The man lay still in the sunbaked dust;

a drunken soldier had taken a life and desolated a home. Some revolvers gleamed in the hands of angry Texans and in another moment the soldier lay writhing in the dust.

Just then an officer waved his sabre and the signal guns boomed down the line. Like a mighty tidal wave the dense mass of men, horses and wagons swayed for an instant and then went on with a rush. There were cries and shouts—and oaths and blasphemy from the drunken soldiers. The noise of rumbling wagons and the clatter of horses' hoofs sounded like the distant roar of cannonading. On surged the swaying line, horsemen dashing out in front here and there. Every little distance was to be found the wreck of a wagon that had been crushed in the rush. Other wagons were stalled in ravines, horses dropped from exhaustion, throwing their riders, who lay in gullies or on the rocky sides of the mountain ridges, with mangled limbs, begging for a drop of water. But the mad fever of the rush was on all and little heed was paid to suffering.

Our horses were in fine condition and were fleet of foot and ere long we were in the lead, in a wild race with the wind. We sighted a

stream of clear running water, whose banks were fringed with trees, and a valley which stretched out for miles to the north. We reached a grove and found the cornerstone that marked the dividing line of two sections. We fired our Winchesters as a signal to the others that those claims were taken, and immediately commenced throwing up earth to show that improvements were under way. Then, tired out with the excitement of the day, we sat down under the trees to rest and talk it all over, and, in the late afternoon, fell asleep from sheer exhaustion.

It was dark when Mark suddenly awoke and aroused me with the shout: "Get up, for your life, get up! The plains are on fire!"

I was on my feet in an instant. The southern sky was aglow. Great tongues of flame were leaping through the inky blackness of the night, with a hiss and roar that sounded like the coming of a storm. We hurriedly mounted our frantic horses and rode swiftly into the northern darkness—whither, we knew not; our only thought was to distance the fire far enough to give us a chance to burn a space about us and thus find safety.

Suddenly I felt a falling sensation. Then

there were pains in my head and mysterious, dreadful aches in my legs. Visions flitted before apparently unseeing eyes and at last I came to realize that I was lying on a cot in a tent. Mark came in and I asked him where I was.

"Never mind now," he said gently. To-morrow came, and the next day, and still another, but Mark remained silent. Gradually my mind became normal and I distinctly recalled the last moments of consciousness; the prairie fire, the wild ride to safety. Mark then added the closing chapter. My horse had plunged into a rocky canon, fully 20 feet in depth. His horse had scented the danger and had reared, saving him from my fate. He back-fired the grass, and, in its light, saw me lying at the bottom of the canon. Tenderly he cared for me during the night and in the morning got a doctor, who set the broken limb, and here I was convalescing.

XVII.

TOLD AROUND THE CAMPFIRE.

"You knew Cora Belle Fellows, that white girl at Cheyenne Agency, South Dakota, who married a buck Indian, eh, Bill?"

"Yep," Bill Hawkins answered, "and I know what the results were, too.

"About a year after she had left a fashionable seminary in New York state and came among the redskins to teach them manners and the like, she surprised and shocked everybody by announcing her marriage to Chaska, a full blood Sioux, twenty-one years of age. Then her troubles began. She was frowned upon by both whites and Indians. She went with Chaska to his tepee and lived upon the coarse chuck furnished by Uncle Sam.

"Her escapade was commented upon by all the newspapers of the country at the time, and a museum man of Chicago induced her and Chaska to place themselves upon exhibition. For two years she was inspected by the

public, which in the meantime had made her presents until she had a carload of furniture.

"Then she concluded to go back to the Agency and make a farmer out of Chaska, and so with the money earned in the museum, she and her Indian lord returned. She purchased land some miles from the Agency and built a house.

"The agent and myself rode out there about six months after they had gone to housekeeping. We were both curious to know how they were getting along.

"It was a sight for your whiskers. Outside sat nearly all her furniture. The covers of plush had been ripped off for Indian horse trappings, the wood was stained and weather cracked.

"The house was without doors, worn blankets being hung instead. The floors were cold and bare. In a corner upon an old mattress lay Cora Belle Fellows or Mrs. Chaska. An old squaw sat by her side, crooning some lingo over her new born kid. She did not want to talk and we went away. Chaska soon after left her and took a wife from his own tribe, leaving her to live in a tepee about the Agency like any other squaw, feeding on

Uncle Sam's grub.

"You might as well have tried to shove butter down a wildcat's neck with a hot awl as to have tried to talk that gal out of marrying the buck."

"Marrying is bad business, anyway, unless they are both hooked up right," observed the cook. "There is old Ben Berkley living over on the Cottonwood. He was pretty well fixed before he married that widder. She was a spiritualist or something of the sort, and used to go off in trances and have white lights coming around until she scared old Ben nearly to death. She was always running over the country telling people's future and leaving Ben at home to cook. He took to drinking and one day got the D. T.'s and thought a freight engine was chasing him up and down the alleys of the town, and he finally crawled under a barn to keep out of its way, when the boys rescued him. After that he would not drink any more, but poured the licker in his boots and would get as full as a tick by absorption.

"His wife had brought to the ranch a measley water Spaniel, which Ben used to amuse himself with by throwing cobs and

sticks into the river and teaching the dog to swim in and get them and bring them back to him, not thinking of the great blessing it was finally to be to him.

"Ben had been blasting out a hole for a cyclone cellar with sticks of gun-cotton, when his wife took it into her head that she wanted a mess of fish.

" 'No time to fish,' said Ben. 'Take a stick of that dynamite and go down to the creek where the water is still and blow out a mess for yourself.'

"His wife took the cartridge and lit the fuse, then gave the thing a toss into the creek. The dog was there and thinking she was playing with him, swam in and got the cartridge and came running up the bank to give it to her. Then she started to run over the plowed ground, yelling at the top of her voice, 'Drap it, Tige! Drap it!' There was an explosion and a hole in the ground big enough to bury a horse. The dog had gone up higher than Elijah, while Mrs. Berkley was laying in a furrow with one leg injured by the cartridge. In a day or two the leg swelled up and old Ben sent for the cross-roads doctor, who de-

cided that the injured leg would have to come off.

"The doctor went to town the next day to get some tools, and was so glad over getting a job that he filled up on cactus whiskey and came back and cut off the wrong leg. The sore leg got well afterwards, but, Gee-whiz! It tickled old Ben nearly to death, for she has to stay at home now."

"Story sounds fishy to me," remarked Ned Antler.

"Billy Bolton nearly lost his life for using that word," said Hank Pool. "You all know Billy runs a paper over at Woodward, on the Panhandle trail.

"There had been a hold-up in town, and Jim Belden was accused of it. After the trial before a justice of the peace, Belden was acquitted. In commenting on the affair in his paper the next day, Billy said Belden's story which secured his release sounded fishy. Belden was a bad man. He saddled his broncho, filled his saddle pockets with grub, and his skin full of whiskey and went over to Billy's printing office. He hitched the broncho in front, and with the paper in one hand and his Winchester in the other he went

in and asked Billy what he meant by saying his story was fishy. Billy was taken by surprise, for he saw that Belden meant to kill him, as he was all ready to hit the trail

"'Fishy,' says Billy. 'Aha, fishy, fishy. Why that's a compliment, my dear boy. Saint Peter used to fish and said so many good things that people used to call his sayings fishy. It was a favorite expression with Aristotle and Socrates, when they addressed Napoleon the Great, to say, 'I hope your royal majesty will speak some imperial fishy things today.' It is—ah, ahah, sort of an international e pluribus unum expression, a general sort of a non compos mentis, as it were, you understand.'

"'Oh, well, if that's all,' said Belden, 'it's all right, but I wouldn't use the word often if I were you, for some of the boys might not be as well posted as I am. Much obliged, Billy. I was just passing and thought I would subscribe for the paper for a year. Here is $2.00. Mail it to me at Lampassas.''

"Bolton got off light," said Tom Tyler. "Over at Las Vegas two years ago a sheep man called 'Doc' Kinnie a liar and before the fellow could think twice Doc had his ear sliced

off, and he went around afterwards using it for a beer check. He would call up the house and pay for the drinks with the sheepman's ear; he always redeemed it, though, for fear the owner would buy it back." "Cut it out, boys, cut it out, get to roost in your blankets," said the boss. "We hit the trail at 5 o'clock in the morning and make the drive to Cimarron by noon."

An hour later, the fire had smouldered to embers, the stars twinkled in the great dark blue dome of the sky, a soft south breeze fanned the Oklahoma plains and all was silent, save the tramp of horses' hoofs as the outriders circled the herd of bedded cattle.

XVIII.

THE LONE GRAVE ON THE MESA.

High upon the mesa northwest of Colorado City, Colo., and near the old cemetery used by the pioneers of the early sixties, there is a lonely grave, around which clings a romance of the early days, which is recalled by the phenomena which many persons say they have witnessed when passing at night.

As the story goes, Marie Tinville, the beautiful daughter of Victor Tinville lived with her parents in a cabin near Colorado City, in 1863. About that time Leon Murat, a dashing young fellow of about 20 years came out from St. Louis and found employment on her father's ranch. It was a case of love at first sight, intensified by isolated conditions and an almost constant companionship.

The cabin stood near the now famous Garden of the Gods, and many were the evenings the young people wandered among the towering rocks in the wondrous bright moonlight

of that region, and talked of love, while the shadows of Pike's Peak shrouded the dreamy valley.

Love's young dream was rudely awakened one day in the autumn of 1864, by the call to arms to join Colonel Chivington in his campaign against the hostile Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians, who were then murdering the settlers of Colorado.

Men were needed, and Leon was brave. He kissed his sweetheart good-bye and rode away with that avenging column of horsemen who fought the battle of Sand Creek in Colorado, November 29, 1864.

Murat's command did nearly three months' campaigning over the dry, heated plains before any effective work was accomplished.

Early in November a mounted column of 650 Colorado volunteers of Colonel Shoup's Third Regiment, 175 of the First Regiment and a few mounted Mexicans, formed the fighting force under Colonel Chivington. A large band of Indians was located on the banks of Sand Creek, about forty miles north of where Ft. Lyons now stands and near the village of Kit Carson.

Bent's Fort, a rude frontier structure of

palisades, stood some miles below Ft. Lyons. It was to this point that Colonel Chivington led his men when he learned that Black Kettle and White Antelope with some three thousand braves, were encamped upon the banks of Sand Creek.

The column made prisoners of all whom they met, lest word should reach the Indians that they were pushing forward to the attack. At Bent's Fort a halt was made to rest riders and horses. On the night of the 28th the column headed for the encampment on Sand Creek, taking as a guide, a half breed son of Colonel Bent, and carrying in their rear a small brass cannon and ammunition wagon.

The night was cold and a bleak wind blew from the north. With jingle of spur and clank of sabre the column rode fours abreast through the darkness. The Indian guide led them through a shallow lake in the hope that the ammunition might become wet. When about half way through the lake Murat's horse floundered and wet him completely in the icy waters. The column rode on while Anthony Bott remained to assist him. After dividing his own dry clothing with Murat the two started to find the trail of the flying col-

umn in the darkness. They were favored both by their knowledge of the plains and the instinct of their horses, but for five hours they were alone in the darkness of a hostile country.

They came up with their command in the grey dawn of the morning as they were forming for battle behind a ridge that overlooked the Indian camp. Here Colonel Chivington divided his men, sending a column of twos in opposite directions so as to surround the camp. The Indians were in their tepees when the cannon sent a crash of iron into their midst. The battle was on. Chief White Antelope came rushing from his tepee brandishing a rifle, urging on his followers. The encircling horsemen closing in on them emptied their rifles and revolvers into the confused mass of Indians.

Indian depredations had been so numerous in Colorado and the atrocities so cruel, that the men, many of whom had been victims of Indian raids and had lost their all, their families or friends being butchered, gave no quarter, and when the battle ended they felt even more justified when there was found within the tepees a number of scalps recently

torn from the heads of white women and children. Nearly 1,000 Indians were killed when the firing ceased, and a crimson tide ebbed into the creek and reddened its waters with blood.

A squaw and a boy were found hiding in the tall grass. Murat shot the squaw and captured the boy. Bott bought the young Indian, intending to bring him up in civilization. The boy was standing by his side when, an hour later a pistol shot rang out from a group of men some yards away and the young Indian fell dead. Bott was angered, and drawing his own revolver, offered one hundred dollars to anyone who would point out the man who fired the shot. No one would tell.

Murat with a companion was trying to capture some of the Indians' horses far out on the plain, when one of Black Kettle's fleeing Indians rose from behind a hillock and shot him dead. White Antelope was killed, while a large number of Indians under Black Kettle escaped by scattering like quail over the plain and hiding in the grass.

While the battle was raging the families of many of the soldiers from Colorado City

had gathered in the Anway Fort at that place, and a telepathic wave of horror spread over all. Many were praying and weeping, and all seemed to feel that a dreadful thing was being enacted in which their loved ones were taking part.

When the news of the battle reached the fort and the death of young Murat was announced, Marie Tinville fell in a swoon, after which her mind was a blank. From that time on her decline was rapid and in a few months she was laid in the lonely grave upon the mesa.

After that stories were told of strange things. A white light was seen about the grave, which vanished on close approach. Once old Ben Jordan an antelope hunter, came to town at night, his long hair fairly on end, saying that a white light had risen in front of him near the grave, out of which protruded a naked arm. The incredulous asked him what he had been drinking, but he stuck to the story as long as he lived.

George Birdsall, a young man of Colorado City, had heard the story and thought it all a joke. He recently went out one night to in-

vestigate. He saw no white light, but felt a peculiar rush of cold air and a touch upon the cheek as soft as if some one had gently kissed him.

XIX.

UNDER THE BLACK FLAG.

As the sun went down below the rolling glassy waters of the gulf of Mexico, I sat on the hatchway steps of the little steamer Dauntless, fully realizing for the first time that perhaps before morning I would be swinging to the yard-arm of a Spanish man-of-war.

I was sick, anyway, and the abominable mixture of whiskey and garlic which Mark Witherspoon had given me as a preventive against yellow fever, had made the contemplation worse.

The Dauntless was loaded with arms and munitions of war for the Cuban Insurgents and if the Spaniards caught us we would doubtless share the fate of the crew of the Virginius at Santiago de Cuba in 1873.

I had credentials as a newspaper correspondent, but Mark Witherspoon and I had duly enlisted at Tampa, Florida, in the cause

of Cuban liberty, and we were assigned to the third division of Garcia's army under command of General Ruloff.

Our little vessel hugged the Florida Keys for more than a week. Meantime we were reinforced by small parties of twos and threes, who came in open boats by night. The stores of rifles, ammunition and dynamite came by small sailing craft. We now numbered thirty-seven men. Eight of us were Americans, two were Germans and the others were Cubans from Tampa and Key West.

On the night we were ready to start the distinguishing lights of a revenue cutter were seen, so we lay close in a little cove and banked the fires in our furnace until four o'clock the next afternoon, when we slipped out and put for the high seas, headed straight for the coast of Cuba. When night fairly set in, there came small squalls and a drizzling rain. We had no signal lights out and every sound was muffled, even the funnel was so protected that not a spark could escape. All night long everybody was most keenly alert, and it was towards daylight that the irregular mountain lines of Cuba could be discerned, standing in shadowy relief against a

darkened sky. On entering a little land-locked harbor we signaled with flash lanterns and were soon answered from the shore. Nearly a hundred insurgents met us, and the work of unloading quickly began. During the morning we were reinforced by nearly a hundred more Cubans who brought ponies and pack mules. As soon as we were unloaded our vessel hoisted the Danish flag and with all possible speed put out for the high seas. Her hull was well down on the horizon when we took up our march inland. Our route lay over tortuous mountain trails over which our ponies climbed with the agility of goats. The trail was often dangerous in the extreme, for the slip of a pony's hoof would have sent both horse and rider hundreds of feet below. We had taken trails unknown to the Spanish soldiery.

When about fifty miles in the interior, we reached a plateau and here found encamped some eight hundred men under General Ruloff. From the very first I had but little confidence in him. He was a Polish Jew, well educated in military tactics, but unfitted to conduct a guerrilla warfare with men like us

who were virtually fighting under the black flag.

Subsequent events proved this, for at the fight of Santo Esperitu we left our improvised hospital unguarded, and Captain Sandoval cut to our rear and captured it and after destroying much of our valuable stores, put every sick man to death.

Our rendezvous lay in the province of Puerto Principe and our line of action westward. After the fight at Santo Esperitu we never massed in action, but divided into companies of about one hundred, free to run or fight as our commander ordered.

Our detachment captured Captain Sandoval and a party of his men, and in view of his inhuman treatment of our prisoners, he was promptly shot. Sandoval went to his death as all other cowardly butchers do, trembling like a leaf in the wind.

We were ordered by Ruloff to burn all azucaderos (sugar mills) and to blow up with dynamite all railroad culverts and bridges and to destroy all telegraph lines. Our division frequently made rapid raids, always gaining ground westward. The division to which we were attached raided the town of San Lazaro

which was defended by a small body of Spaniards. We routed them and captured some two hundred Mauser rifles and a large quantity of ammunition and other military stores. Our commander then ordered the execution of the alcalde (mayor) for having betrayed a number of insurgent sympathizers, causing them to be shot, and their families to be driven through the streets, beaten with sticks.

Early in November we were encamped near Nuevitas where we had lain inactive for several days. One afternoon scouts had reported an advancing column and we had chosen for our ambuscade the ruins of a stone building, now overgrown with vines and nearly hidden from view by a cactus thicket.

There was a hushed stillness in the dark forest that lay beyond the long yellow road, and in the cane fields that stretched away for leagues to our right. To the left the San de Cubitas mountains, with their covering of dense tropical vegetation, rose dark and silent. A lookout had climbed a tall cebra tree and was watching with a field glass. He suddenly gave the signal. Then the men were told in whispers each to select a man and to fire at a given order. The Cuban sun blazed

hotly down that day. The air was close and stifling in our position behind the cactus thicket and our hearts beat quick and fast in those moments of waiting. There was the low rumble of horses hoofs, a cloud of yellow dust arose from down the road, and soon the Spanish column was almost abreast the 150 rifles that pointed from behind the stone wall. I peered over the sights of my Winchester and drew a bead on the breast of a young officer. He was chatting gaily with a companion and as he turned his face revealed a handsome countenance. It was a boyish face with the dawn of manhood just settling upon the brow. Thoughts crowded each other in my mind just then: Perhaps the young man was a conscript, not here by his own choice to imperil his young life, and I, whom he had never wronged, an unsuspected foe, safely hid in the cactus thicket behind the stone wall, about to send his soul into eternity. I lowered my aim from his breast to his horse just behind the shoulder. The order came to fire. The trigger that would have pulled like a ton weight a second before pulled easily now. And so all through those dreadful volleys that we poured into the

struggling ranks. For firing into a mass of men is a different thing from that of firing upon one man singly. When the smoke of battle cleared away more than forty of the routed Spanish column lay dead or wounded in the road. I went to the place where the young trooper's horse had fallen and there lay the young officer pinioned underneath with a broken leg. I felt that I wanted to help him. I knew from the look on his manly face that in private life he would have been my friend, but to show a kindly feeling at that time would have made me a suspect among my comrades in arms. Their machetes flashed in the sunlight and their strokes falling swift and fast reddened the soil of Puerto Principe. Mark and I stood silent, helpless spectators of the horrors of war and revenge, wreaked by men, who in the remembrance of wrongs and outrage, were lost to any feeling of common humanity. There was only one act of kindness which I dared perform. In the pocket of his blood-stained blouse I found a letter. It was from his mother in Seville, and bore a mother's love and sister's prayer for his safe return. When I afterwards

landed at Galveston, I sent it to his home, with an account of howhe died upon the battlefield.

The blazing sun was yet high when we were in our saddles and moving away. I saw a vulture circling above the battlefield, one, two, then a dozen, then a score. These black-winged scavengers had scented death, and there let contemplation end. Night comes suddenly in the tropics, when the sun dips beyond the sea, but here and there in the valley were lights, lantern like at first, spreading soon like a long prairie fire. They were in the cane fields which our men were firing, and as the flames swept on, the bursting stalks sounded like a battle with light revolvers. It lit the night, and its glare and gloom added mystery to the dark forest beyond the road. Morning came and we were safely encamped amid the hills. The birds sang merrily and the sun dried the dew upon the tall, rank grass, and when it came roll call, two names were stricken off. They had reported the day before to the Great Commander of the great beyond.

XX.

IN CUBAN JUNGLES.

Spies brought news of an encampment of Spanish infantry a day's march ahead. All was hustle in the Cuban insurgent camp. Twenty-eight Texans who had recently joined our command were allowed the privilege of leading our column to the attack. That day we followed circuitous mountain trails and encamped at night in the heart of a dense forest through whose trailing vines we made our way along the bridle paths. By 4 o'clock in the morning we were again in the saddle. There was no blare of trumpet or beat of drums to announce our coming as our column of horsemen stole from out the silent forest and wound along the road like a great creeping serpent to strike death.

The Spanish camp was beyond a small stream through which we were to charge. Halting a mile beyond their picket lines, saddle girths were tightened, weapons were

looked to, and we formed in a column of fours. Americans to the front, and ready for the charge. Ten stalwart Cubans were selected to form the skirmish line two hundred yards in advance and engage the enemy when they reached the banks of the stream. The column was then to charge at a gallop and use the revolver and machete.

The first rays of the sun were gilding the mountain crests and awakening the flamingoes around the lagoons when a Spanish sentry's rifle told the moment of action had come.

On pressed our column at double quick, while the increased firing ahead warned us that the Spanish camp was aroused. There was the heavy rattle of Mauser rifles, followed by the sharper report of Winchesters as our advance guard reached the stream and drew aside to let our column pass.

The little river flowed from the mountains and plunged over rock and cliff in wild tumult. Below the ford which we were crossing there were falls and as the Spaniards fired a volley that struck our column midway in the stream, they emptied many saddles, while

wounded men were carried down to watery graves.

The Spaniards threw a double cordon of infantry at bayonet charge against our cavalry, but the Texans' revolvers opened a gap and the column rode through the demoralized camp, doing its fearful work. On the column plunged, fire leaping from the deadly revolvers on either side. When beyond the Spanish camp, the bugle sounded wheel, and back we rode among the panic stricken soldiers, dealing death until they broke in confusion, and gained the cover of the forest. We halted long enough to gather up our wounded and burn the supply train. An hour later and we were in full retreat to our rendezvous in the San de Cubitas mountains. One evening Mark and I started for the vicinity of an azucadero, where we knew there was a patch of sweet potatoes. The night was dark, damp and chilly, and the road lay through a clearing of tall palms whose white trunks stood like ghostly sentinels. The silence was unbroken save by the sound of horses' hoofs, the croaking of frogs and the distant baying of dogs about some negro casa. We did not suppose there was a Spaniard within fifty

miles of us, and as we rode our ponies silently along a horseman suddenly appeared in front of us, and in clear Castilian tones shouted: "Quien vive!" "Cuba Libre!" cried Mark, drawing his machete and spurring his horse forward. At the same instant I discharged my revolver full in the sentinel's face. We wheeled our horses and rode quickly into the clearing, knowing better than to retreat by the road we came. It was well we did not, for soon a body of Spanish cavalry came tearing down the road, firing a volley ahead at random. We rode on through the clearing, being now cut off from our command. At length we came to a creek whose banks were steep and fringed on either side by trees, from whose branches hung a network of tangled vines and creepers. The water flowed sluggishly, as most streams in Cuba do. We determined to cross the creek at once, knowing that with the first streak of dawn we would be tracked, for we had left an easy trail in the soft soil. We used our machetes with great difficulty to cut a path through the vines, and when we reached the water's edge swam our ponies across and cut our way through on the opposite bank where we lay

down to await developments of the morning. Both of us must have fallen asleep, for we were startled by a loud grito alto from the other side of the creek. Peering through the bushes we saw a Spanish trooper gesticulating to a party of cavalry in the rear. In another second there was the simultaneous report of our two Winchesters and the trooper rolled from his horse. We hurriedly mounted our ponies amid the fusillade of bullets from the approaching squad of cavalry, and spurring our horses toward a cane field, we were soon hidden. A little later we abandoned our horses and started them off in another direction with a lashing, thinking thereby to gain time and elude our pursuers. Then we started for the azucadero. It was our first intention to fire it, thinking its flames would attract the attention of our command and bring us relief. But as we came out of the cane field we saw a body of troopers crossing a bridge which spanned the creek. We did not think they saw us, and in our haste to find a hiding place we ran around the building to a well which supplied the boilers. Leaping on a platform we found a lot of empty sugar hogsheads standing on end near a lot of filled

ones. We quickly rolled an empty beside them and turned the open end down, getting under it. The troopers had seen us and tracked us straight to the well. They supposed we had descended by means of the pump pipe and hidden our bodies in the water, for they began hurling stones in the water and with a mixture of Spanish oaths called us "Perro Americano" (dog American). Satisfied with their work of exterminating us in the well, they rode away.

Meanwhile we were couched in close quarters, with our revolvers tightly clenched, determined to sell out as dearly as possible. When they had gone, Mark whispered, "I am badly shot," indicating the spot by placing his hand upon his abdomen. The morning wore away and our situation was becoming unbearable. We were cramped and almost suffocated. Mark had swooned away twice in the agony of pain. Fortunately we had filled our canteens from the brackish waters of the creek, which alleviated our sufferings some. Yet it was past noon before we ventured out. I helped Mark inside the azucadero, where he laid down upon a pile of cane refuse, while I examined his wound.

One look was enough. The contents of the abdomen were oozing out through the wound, and I knew that was a fatal sign. I carried a pocket case containing a few medicines for an emergency, among which was some morphine. I gave him an eighth grain tablet which relieved him some, but at times his pain grew so great that he begged me to shoot him.

We could hear distant firing during the afternoon, but the sounds were growing fainter and we knew our command was retreating. When night came on I gave Mark another tablet of morphine and lay down for some rest. The dreadful chill that always follows a gunshot wound had set in, but I had no blankets or other coverings with which to lessen his sufferings. Thoroughly exhausted myself, I soon fell asleep, and when I awoke late in the night, I was alone with the dead. For me to bury him was impossible, and I could not think of leaving him there a prey to the vultures. So I did what I should have wanted him to do for me had our places been reversed. Sorrowfully I left him alone in the now burning azucadero and while the flames of his funeral pyre were lighting the night, I started for the sea.

That day I fell in with a party of insurgents who were on their way to the coast to meet another filibustering vessel. As malaria and the effects of climate were telling heavily upon me, they kindly gave me aid in boarding the craft, by which I afterwards landed at the docks at New Orleans, feeling that I had done my share in the cause of Cuban liberty.

XXI.

EMULOUS OF WASHINGTON.

"I don't know that I can tell you fellows about the first dollar I ever earned," said W. P. Epperson, the pioneer editor of the Colorado City ————————, "but I do know the first and last lie I ever told."

"You ought to remember, seeing that it has not been over twenty minutes," said George Geiger.

"Twenty minutes be smashed!" yelled Epperson, reaching for his gun, "it's been twenty years this summer. My first lie was a trivial one about fishing, and the last happened in this way.

"Twenty years, did you say?" interrupted the hired man with an incredulous look.

"That's what I mean," and the veteran editor took another chew of Battle Ax, while a halo of white settled down about his head.

"In the autumn of 1885," he continued, "I stepped off a Union Pacific train at Silver

Creek, Nebraska, and after a good supper I determined to drive across the country to Osceola, a distance of thirty miles. The driver of the livery rig was about the most handsomely attired imitation of a cow boy I had ever seen. He wore a new suit of corduroy with a broad sombrero and high-heeled boots with ornamented red tops, also a bright blue shirt and a rattlesnake skin necktie. I had him sized up for a green country boy from Indiana or Illinois who had seen but little of frontier life, and he confirmed my suspicions a little later as we were crossing the Platte River bridge by saying, 'I suppose if you knew what my business had been you would hesitate to ride with me alone on the plains at night.'

"It was getting dark and we were crossing a wide stretch of the then desolate plain that lay between the Platte River and Osceola. I was enjoying a cigar and felt at peace with all the world, when a devlish thought struck me, and I asked, 'What has been your business?'

" 'Well, sir,' he replied, 'I have been a cow boy.'

" 'The deuce you have,' said I, 'Shake, old

man, you are a fellow after my own heart, and since you have been so kind to tell me your business, I will let you know who I am, I, sir, am Doc Middleton.'

"The fellow almost fell from his seat in surprise. Doc Middleton was the notorious outlaw whose depredations had become so terrorizing to the settlers of Nebraska that the State had offered a reward of $5,000 for his capture, dead or alive. I enjoyed the joke I was playing all the more when I saw the effect of my speech.

" 'Just now,' I continued, 'I am trying to get away from a sheriff's posse; that is why I am making the cut across the country. They may overtake us, and if they do, there will be some heavy shooting.'

" 'With this I drew a big Colt revolver from my overcoat pocket and I said I had two more like it in my valise. I also told him if they overtook us he must get down by the dashboard and drive for dear life, that he might get shot in the back, but that would be cow boy's luck.

By this time he was nervous and began looking backwards as he whipped the ponies

up at a lively gait. I did not pretend to notic it and so kept up my lying.

" 'The first man I ever killed,' I told him, 'was a one-eyed man in Utah, who called me a liar, and I threw his body over a cliff, and my conscience hurt me for full half an hour afterwards. After that I soon got so I loved to blow a man's head off just to see his brains fly.'

"It had grown quite dark, and having nothing better to do, I told him all the bloody stories I could think of and claimed them as my own experience until I became tired of the foolishness and lapsed into silence. We had made about half our journey and were passing a farm house set in a dense grove of trees. There were lights in the house and the young man broke the silence by asking, 'Please, dear Mister Doc Middleton, may I go in and get a drink of water? I think I have got a fever in my throat.'

" 'Certainly, my boy, certainly,' I replied taking the lines. He slid off the rig and ran to the house, while I sat there like a fool holding the horses. About twenty minutes passed and he did not return. Then I noticed the lights in the house had been extinguished. I

called loudly for the young man to return, and when it flashed over my mind that to him I was the outlaw Doc Middleton, and he might warn the farmer of my presence, who might even then be waiting to get a shot at me, I yelled again for him in fear, louder than before, but there was no response. The more I thought of my predicament, the more nervous I became, until the cold sweat stood out like beads on my face.

"I could stand it no longer, and seizing the whip, I cut the horses a lash and crouched down by the dashboard just as I had been instructing the young man to do. In the sudden dash, the horses broke one of the buggy springs, and I wandered on the plains until morning, for I had missed the Osceola road. It cost me $2 to have the spring mended and $5 to send a man back to Silver Creek with the rig, to say nothing of being scared within an inch of my life."

XXII.

ON THE ROUND UP.

The round-up of today differs in no essential particular from that of former years, excepting in the number of cattle rounded up and the number of men and horses required in its working.

In 1900 I spent some months on a ranch in northern Colorado, where there are still large bunches of cattle.

For some days prior to the start the foreman had been busy preparing the wagon, rounding up saddle horses, hiring men and making final arrangements for the start.

When the day arrived everything was in a state of activity and as evening approached the corral was filled with horses. Each "waddie" was tolled off his string of mounts. Ten to each man, and after the summer on rich buffalo grass every horse was in a state that boded no good for the unaccustomed rider.

That night we ate our suppers at the chuck

wagon at the round-up camp, after which the boys sat around a chip fire, telling stories and smoking.

The cowboy story differs from any I have ever heard, both in extravagance of statement and manner of telling. They relate to anything and everything that has ever come under his acute observation.

"I always had an especial desire to make governors my associates," said "Beaut" Bowers, "so with a view to a pleasant acquaintance I once called upon Governor Waite, presenting the compliments of Governor Rentfrow of Oklahoma and several other governors, none of whom had sent any compliments, but then they are so cheap I thought I could give him a few without their missing them.

"I had heard that he wanted to ride to his bridle bits in blood and I wanted to get into the swim, although I would rather it was beer.

"It was the governor's day to be out of sorts, and he did not seem inclined to talk. I wanted to talk and resolved to break the ice of his reserve in some manner. So when he asked how the people of Oklahoma stood the

panic, I told him we had not felt it in the least. He seemed surprised at this and asked, "Why not!" I replied we were all too poor to own anything and had got beyond expecting it. "Well, poor people have to live; how do they manage for some money?" I told him when silver was demonetized we took to catching Keeley graduates and scraping the chloride of gold off them with a case-knife and had done fairly well.

"The old man stared at me and asked me if I had wheels in my head too. Everybody had been saying the old governor had wheels in his head until I believe he was afraid to pick his ears lest a cog clip the end of his finger off.

"I had recently been on Zack Mulhall's ranch in Oklahoma, where the Reverend Buchanan used to come and talk Populism to the boys until I got tired of it one night and stole his false teeth where he put them to soak in a tin cup. There was a lot of socialism too, in his talk that didn't go down, for on that ranch the first fellow up of a morning got the best socks, and that made me fall out with the idea of community of interests. But to humor the governor I spoke of the wide-

spreading revolutionary sentiment in Texas and Oklahoma and hinted that they had their eyes turned eagerly on his movements, as it was their hope he might devise some way to lead the country out of the silver difficulty. He then showed me a letter from President Diaz, of Mexico. It suggested another pan-American congress in the interests of silver. "It's no use, though," he said, "the last assembly of the kind amounted to nothing. Eastern influences would soon retard any movement of the sort.'

" 'If we are to continually be the back dooryard of the east,' I replied, 'the sooner we secede from it the better.'

"Here was a long pause, the old man looking at me intently to see if the wheels in my head were working, and I tried at the same time to discover if the machinery in his was all right.

"Seeing the point of vantage I continued: 'Divide the country from the Mississippi River, establish a new republic with our own capital, make Galveston our New York, with a national railroad to that point; coin our gold and silver, make banks a public trust, with any betrayal of it punishable as high treason.

If we are going into revolution we must have something like this for our object, otherwise we will only terminate in anarchy. As governor of Colorado call for a delegation of representative citizens from other states to meet here in convention and start the ball rolling.'

"I delivered this sentiment in round, strong terms, while the governor listened, apparently pleased.

"'You will see all you want to of revolution before two years,' he quietly said, 'it is coming sure as fate and were I your age I would win fame and fortune by—'

"At this moment an unfortunate affair happened. An Indian had given me a white bulldog. That dog had more sense than half the people and I loved him like a brother. One day the dog got too close to the heels of a heifer and she kicked one eye out. He felt so bad over it that I wrote to an eye doctor to send me a glass eye for my dog. He wrote back that he did not deal in dogs' eyes, but sent me a bright blue human eye. One of the boys and I managed to fix it in and the dog was very proud of it, only it fit so tight he could not wink. He would lay for hours asleep with the glass eye staring with

an expression of strangled innocence confronting the murderer. Where I went that dog went also, and all through the conversation with Governor Waite my dog lay on the floor asleep, but that glass eye kept staring at the governor's dog until he took it for an insult and came over to our part of the room for a scrap.

"In the melee of separating the dogs the governor jabbed his thumb in that glass eye and nearly cut it off. That made him so mad he would not talk any more and I may have to wander on through eternity guessing what he would have said. My dog felt so humiliated that he went home by the back alleys."

Other stories followed, relating to horses and daring deeds of their riders. It seemed like we had only slept a few moments when we were awakened by the call of the boss, "roll out," "roll out." In a short time every man of the twenty-five was on his feet, rolling up his bed and throwing it in a pile ready to be loaded on the wagon. All gladly answered to the call, "Chuck's ready!"

Each man took a plate and tin cup, knife, fork and spoon, and went to the Dutch ovens, where everything was cooked and helped him-

self. The breakfast consisted of bacon, potatoes, warm bread and black coffee. Seated on the ground Turk fashion, with plate on knees and cup by side, we ate our hearty meal.

After breakfast the bed wagon was loaded with its freight. The chuck wagon which was driven by the cook and drawn by six horses, pulled out for the next camp, followed by the wrangler with the bunch of unused saddle horses. Orders were given to the riders, the place of the next camp appointed. The range was divided into circles, beginning at the old camp and ending at the new. Riding the outside is the hardest of all. The boys took turns at this as each must use his best horse, start first and get in last. It is his business to round up all the cattle on the limits of the range and throw them toward the center, where they will be taken up by the next man and so on until the whole is bunched together and driven to camp. Here they were held in a bunch until the foreman with his chosen riding men and trained cut horses went into the bunch and cut out the beef cattle and calves that had escaped branding and ear marking.

The beef cattle were then cut into a bunch

by themselves and held by some of the men. After the beeves were out the calves were branded. The calves were roped from horseback, generally by both hind feet, then another rope was thrown over the head and the calf stretched out. Thus held by two horses the hot branding iron was applied. This required only a moment and "doggy" was on his feet making for the main bunch. So the work proceeded until the whole bunch had been worked.

The beef cattle were driven along with the wagons and night herded until five train loads had been gathered.

The unused saddle horses were herded and kept with the camp. They were brought to the wagons each morning by the wrangler. For a corral to catch the horses in, two long ropes were stretched out in the form of a triangle, using the wagon as one side, into which the bunch was driven. Each man then roped his horse for the day. A different horse is used each day, so that one horse is used only once in about eight or ten days, according to the number of horses a man has on his string.

I rode the outside one day with "Beaut" Bowers. We chose our stoutest horses,

Pueblo de Taos (page 181).

cinched on our hulls and rode in a steady lope from 5 o'clock in the morning until 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

When a bunch of cattle was found we started them in toward the center on a full run. We took our slickers from behind our saddles and waved the cattle into a run, which carried them within the next rider's circle.

The cowboys are master hands at yelling, and cattle run at sight of a man on horseback much faster when he begins to yell.

Two or more men went on watch at sundown to keep the cattle from straying. Later in the evening the cattle become quiet and bed down. If the night is still and nothing happens to disturb them, they will remain quiet all night. The stampede is one of the worst things that can happen, even now in these days of wire fences.

If the cattle are only a little scared they may be easily quieted, though sometimes they break away and the men on guard have to ride at break-neck speed through the night, over ground that is dangerous even in the day time. More than one fellow has met with a broken limb or ribs from such a mad ride.

When the cattle break away in this manner

the men ride alongside of the bunch and gradually work up the leaders and sometimes even throw their horses over against them in an attempt to get them to "milling"—that is, get them to running in a circle. Once this is accomplished, the rest is more easy. The bunch is kept milling until exhausted, when they gradually slow down, and at last, after perhaps hours of hard riding, quiet down. Through the rest of the night they need close watching; they are nervous and may break away again. When the cattle become restless at night the boys sing and whistle and walk slowly around and around the bunch. The sound of the human voice seems to have a soothing effect on them.

When we had gathered five train loads of beef they were driven to the railroad station, where car after car was loaded.

XXIII.

THE EGYPT OF AMERICA.

Once I made a horseback ride from Trinidad, Colorado, to El Paso, following the old trail over the Glorietta mountains to Pueblo de Taos and thence by easy stages to El Paso, Texas, my object being to prospect for placer mines.

It is a wild, weird scene, when after crossing the Glorietta range, one finds himself in this storied valley of the Rio Grande, New Mexico, that mysterious land of sunshine, of eternal silence and (may I say) eternal sadness. Sunlight paints the landscapes in rarest tints of blues and greys, heightened by vermillion and bright ochre colorings on cliff and crag, whose silence of ages is broken only by the rumble of the train, to relapse again into its wonted quietude. The land has been asleep for over three hundred years, while the world's progress has been going on about her. Once she was aroused when the cattle

men came from over the range and stocked her valleys, but the cattle did not do well. Then she laid down for another nap. These valleys are those of sadness like unto fabled regions of the hereafter, wherein ungodly spirits are destined to roam forever in isolation from kindred beings. Sad-eyed Mexicans lean against the sunny side of their adobe huts—they are always leaning against something, as though their weak anatomies would not stand alone. They are poor, very poor, but proud. Let a stranger go to their casas and their hospitality is never wanting. A frugal meal of corn, beans and chile is divided with as free a hand as a minister's benediction. Sad-eyed sheep graze upon the scant vegetation of hill and valley, while the mournful, philosophic donkey does the work of the land,—and perhaps the thinking, too. When the shadows of night fall and the mountain range stands in dark relief against the sky the eye can trace the outlines of grotesque faces formed by irregular peaks and curves. Many of them have traditions old as the Sphinx, for the semi-civilization of the Aztecs that once inhabited this land dates hundreds of years before Cabenza de Vaca

explored these valleys of the Pecos and Rio Grande. The sacred fires of the Aztecs have died out in the ashes of the past, yet there are those living who still look for the coming of Montezuma. It seems that every race of people in their decline look for the coming of a redeemer. This belief is kept alive by the Pueblo Indians of these valleys, who bow to the sun from their housetops as he shines from over the mountain range at early morn. Like the men of Mars Hill, they believe in "the unknown God," whose name is too holy to be spoken. They hold sacred all animals living in or near water, which in this dry climate is the greatest blessing.

At Taos they have a tradition that at the flood a few faithful Pueblos gathered upon a mountain top and waited long and in vain for the waters to subside. At last a youth of royal blood and a beautiful virgin decorated with brilliant feathers, were let down from the cliff as an offering to the angry Deity. The waters soon fell, and the youth and maiden were transformed into statues of stone. With all the silence and sadness of this region, contentment seems to reign supreme, and if some genius with the pen of

Washington Irving will study the simple ways of these Mexican people and write of their traditions he will do mankind a service and make himself famous.

Swiftly flows the Rio Grande along its shallow banks, from whence here and there runs an irrigating ditch which waters a patch of corn or vineyard, near the adobe houses which are scattered thickly along the banks of the river, from the Sangre de Christo mountains to the Mexican sea. Here for over three hundred years a semi-Spanish civilization has existed in a sweet contentment to which the Anglo-Saxon race was born a stranger. Here is the Egypt of America, teeming with the traditions of a simple people, content almost with breath alone.

The old mission of Las Cruces was among the first built by the Jesuits in this valley. Behind its altar were two crude paintings of Santo Domingo and Santa Rita, and between them the statuettes of the Virgin and St. Joseph. Beneath the whole was a painting, the scene of which the artist had located somewhere on the borderland between heaven and hell. Gilded saints were flying off in one direction while great horned toads and scor-

pions were pulling dark browed Mexicans and Indians into a sea of flames. At this mission was held the first Auto de Fa in New Mexico. An Apache chief had been made a prisoner and was set to work herding sheep. One day he lost one and the holy father said: "Son of the infidel, what did you do with that sheep?"

"I lost it," replied the Apache, "but you may take it out of my pay."

"Pay! what pay, you sacrilegious toad?"

"Why, out of my daily lashes."

"Holy saints protect us!" exclaimed the padre. "Theft, disbelief and the church itself defied! We will have Judaism here next. Away with him to the faggot fires."

Then, as the flames crept around the Apache chained to a stone post, he repented and the father baptised him and agreed to meet him up yonder, but did not offer to put out the fire. As about two hundred and fifty years have passed since then, they have perhaps met and adjusted their differences by this time.

Cruel as these old religious zealots may have been at times, they did a world of good, for they semi-civilized the natives.

Beside the yellow waters of the Rio Grande and near the Sierra Blanco range, lies El Paso. Its streets were busy with traffic, and tall buildings rose majestically on either side. But the wind sweeps through the mountain pass and the dust storms darken the sky for days at a time. Like all other desert regions the chief boast of its inhabitants is climate and "this exceptionally bad weather only known heretofore to the oldest settler" grows irksome when one has heard it five hundred times in like regions. Around and about El Paso for three hundred miles north, south, east, and west, is desert, and to those who have never seen a desert country it is surprising how all conditions of life are changed. These conditions are harder than in humid countries. In our northern land between Canada and the Gulf, that which sustains life grows in abundance and few people there are who know what it is to be hungry. But here in El Paso there are many of the poorer classes who actually suffer for something to eat.

Within thirty minutes the entire scene had changed. I had crossed the river and was in El Paso del Norte, on the Mexican side of the

We Saw Smoke Signals (page 187).

Rio Grande. Narrow lane-like streets, white adobe buildings with heavily grated windows make the stranger feel that he has intruded on a convention of county jails. In half an hour I had gone backward three centuries. Silent, dark-browed figures walked the streets with Spanish cloak or serape wound majestically around them, donkeys laden with wood, peddlers with hogskins filled with pulque, strangely attired Mexicans, all formed a weird street scene not soon to be forgotten.

It was on the plaza here that General Bonito Juarez camped his little force of 150 men while he went to Washington to appeal to this government to enforce the Monroe doctrine in the midst of our own rebellion. When the American ultimatum went forth to France, Napoleon III withdrew his French troops. Then Juarez marched on to the City of Mexico gathering strength as he went. The unfortunate Maximilian fell into his hands and was executed on the "Cerra de las Campus" (The Hill of the Bells), near Queretaro on the 19th of June, 1867. General Bonito Juarez was a full blooded Aztec whom

Fate seems to have ordained to bring about the political regeneration of his country.

It was a gala day in El Paso del Norte. A company of Rurales from the interior was to contest in a shooting match with the Carbine Rifles and bets were running high. Both sides did some good shooting at 500 yards and the Carbine Rifles won. Bets were paid freely and everybody was in a good humor.

I had formed the acquaintance of Captain Esperanza Provincio and at his invitation I fired a few shots, hitting the bull's eye each time with one of the Mexican carbines.

This exctied everybody's attention and soon some Americans offered to bet that I could beat any man they had in their company shooting at 500 yards. The bets were taken and I was pitted against six crack shots belonging to the Carbine Rifles. I won in every instance and received a neat sum for my skill from my American friends who had won the Mexicans' money. Captain Provincio, not to be outdone in generosity, caused a handsome silver medal to be made which he afterwards presented to me with the compliments of his company.

The Military Band from Chihuahua dis-

coursed sweet music in the plaza that night to a large crowd of citizens from both towns.

The Mexican plaza is the national chimney corner, where at evening a band plays wild, weird strains of martial music, and the young gather about the old to hear tales of daring and valor. It is the plaza where the traditions are kept alive and where the young are taught that the very acme of glory in life is the battlefield.

The soft effects of moonlight, the plaza with its green trees, fountains, and sauntering of senors and senoritas in the presence of the silvertoned bells of an old cathedral and the weird strains of martial music, form the pleasant remembrances of El Paso del Norte, since named Juarez.

In company with a Mexican miner named Martenez I rode westward along the Mexican border for two days, and thence toward the northwest to Gila River, when one morning we saw to the southward a column of smoke ascending. We knew it to be Indian signals and so rode our bronchos into a clump of bushes on the river banks in order to be out of sight.

On scanning the plain with my field glass

I saw a column of dust rising far to the north like a pillar of smoke and rightly guessed it to be caused by a body of horsemen. From the speed they were making, I judged they were either pursuers or being pursued. In either event, we felt fairly safe, as our bronchos were in good condition, were splendid animals, and as we had used them well of late, we believed we could outdistance them if they proved to be hostile Indians. Nearer the cloud of dust approached and the closer I looked with my field glass until I discovered they were Apaches making all haste to reach the mountains. They crossed the Gila River, which was at flood tide, five hundred yards from where we were concealed and disappeared in the direction from whence we saw the smoke signals. We had made up our minds to remain in our hiding places until night, when I saw another dust cloud in the same direction as the first, and in a little while I made out that the dust was raised by a party of scouts and rode out to mee them. They were led by Captain Jack Crawford and were in pursuit of the murderous band of Apaches who had been killing ranchmen in the upper country.

The scouts continued on the pursuit, while we rode away in the direction of Silver City.

It was that band of marauding Apaches which we saw crossing the Gila River that furnished the cause for the Geronimo war, which broke out soon afterwards. It was not until March, in 1886, that General Crook captured Geronimo and his band of Chiricahua Apaches, who escaped from him while they were being taken to Ft. Bowie. The chief and band were recaptured by General Nelson A. Miles in Mexico some months afterwards and sent to Fort Pickens, Florida. Geronimo and fourteen of his band were afterwards taken to Ft. Sill, Indian Territory. Here the cunning old Chief spent most of his time playing monte with the soldiers.

XXIV.

IN THE DOME OF THE SKY.

There are three ways of reaching the summit of Pike's Peak—walking, riding a burro, or seated comfortably in one of the coaches of the Cog Road.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the car was pulled out of the yards at the foot of the Peak. The strongly-built little engine puffed like a living thing, obedient to the task of drawing its heavy load. The wheels moved rapidly, and we ascended the steepest mountain railroad in the world. It wound about the mountain sides in little curves, climbing, always climbing higher and higher, until we shuddered at the dizzy heights as we looked down into the great yawning chasms thousands of feet below.

The air grew cooler in the deep mountain defiles densely wooded with fir, pine, cedar and quaking asp. A great fire once swept up these gorges and burned away the fir and

pine in patches; in their place came the quaking asp, growing here and there in thickets.

Along the slopes and in the dells, wild flowers grew with the luxuriant profusion of a semi-tropical clime. There were columbines and tiger lilies growing at an altitude of ten thousand feet.

Nature has done some queer things in the mighty rocks which stand sentinel guard along the route.

One great boulder is named the Hooded Monk, because of its resemblance to the human head in a monk's cowl. There is a Gog and Magog. The Sphynx, the Lone Fisherman, and many other images of man, bird and beast, wrought by nature's hand in stone.

We glided by one of the loveliest glens in all the mountains; it was called Shady Springs. Here the oriole, the raven and the big blue jay of the mountains have builded their nests and take their morning baths in waters clear as crystal from a spring that gushed from fern and moss covered banks.

Farther on to the right a stream plunges in wild, mad swirl of clear waters and dashing from rock to rock in foamy white, forms

Echo Falls. An elephant's head in bass relief was here to be seen wrought in stone.

We rounded Cameron's Cone and Sheep Mountain and soon began the ascent of the "Big Hill," which has a rise of 1,300 feet to the mile.

Nearing timber line, the road ahead appears to be almost at an angle of 45 degrees.

Higher and higher; the great chasm below grew almost a mile deeper. On one side there were masses of square rock which looked like they were broken by human hands. Here, far above timber line, a variety of wild flowers blossomed, while among the rocks lived some of the strangest little animals, the whistling marmot, a fur animal about the size of an overgrown cat, and the peka, which has the legs of a rabbit and the head of a mountain rat; there were also minks, weasels, porcupines and mountain rats.

At the summit was where the magnificence of the great panorama burst upon our view. Northward, away down on the bluish haze of the horizon, rose the Arapahoe peaks—Long and Grey's Peak, with their white summits glistening in the setting sun. Northwest, Mt. Massive and Mt. Sheridan were outlined

against the clear blue sky, while the green sward of the famous South Park, a hundred miles distant, lay between. College Range, Mt. Yale, Mt. Princeton, Mt. Ouray and Cavenaugh reared their rugged heads far to the west, while green mountain ranges of lesser note lay half way between them.

Far to the southwest, far as the eye could reach, faintly outlined against the sky, rose the snowy peaks of the Sangre de Christo and Sierra Blanco Mountains on the other side of the grand San Luis Valley.

Looking to the south, were the Spanish Peaks and range of Greenhorn Mountains, and a little to the southeast rose the snow-capped Gloriettas on the borders of New Mexico.

To the east, lay the mighty plains, stretching away to where the blue of the sky blended in coppery tones with the billowy green.

There were dark spots here and there that were dense forests of pine. The cloud banners hung above, in all the gorgeous colors of sunset in crimson, purple and gold.

A dark shadow crept out upon the plain toward the east, like the finger of a mighty giant. It moved rapidly along, covering the

yellow sand lines that mark the course of old river beds, and finally, this shadow of Pike's Peak was covered by the shadows of other mountains lower down, until the plain was shrouded in the sable garb of eventide.

But westward, the gold and crimson of the sky lingered long above the distant peak of Mt. Ouray. The purple haze grew denser, and the silence of the hour was made more solemn by the mountains standing out in dark silhouette as the shadows of the night grew deeper and denser.

At such a time as this, one feels as though he stod upon the boundary of another world, while all about the wide white waste and hush of space, eternity and the infinite were calling to other glories, too great for the understanding of the human mind.

Here, in the very dome of the skies, in this clear air, the bright worlds seem to hover over, while the vault is strewn with stars, like isles of light in the misty sea above our heads. The purity of the heavenly prospect awakens that eternal predisposition to melancholy, which dwells in the depth of the soul, and soon the spectacle absorbs us in a vague and indefinable reverie. It is then that thousands

of questions spring up in our mind, and a thousand points of interrogation rise to our sight—the great enigma of creation.

The harvest moon shed her yellow light over the distant plain, and gilded with a phosphorescent light the rocks and crags of the almost bottomless chasm below. The rocks took on fantastic shapes, while distant mountains rose in spectral form.

I sat throughout the night, watching the ever changing panorama, the most wondrous ever spread out to the gaze of man.

The moon and stars were bright above, while far down below storm clouds had formed where within their inky blackness the forked lightning played like so many fiery serpents.

There were thunderous crashes in the wild rocky pit below, where huge rocks were shivered by lightning bolts, while echo, echoing back the thunders of heaven's artillery, would seem as though a legion of imprisoned Joshuas were reaching upward again for that sun which would stand still no more over the plains of Agalon.

The shades of night grew deeper and then the blackness was driven back from the east

by a flush of grey, gradually changing to a deep scarlet tinged with yellow and the sun burst above a dashing sea of clouds. There were purple and crimson waves below rising and falling in mighty billows. A shipless and shoreless ocean whose raging bosom claims no living thing.

An hour more and this purple sea of clouds has drifted on forever from the sight of human eyes.

The summer sun beamed once more upon the vast panorama. Far down upon the green mesa lay Lake Moraine, glistening in the morning light like a molten mass of silver.

Smoke was seen to rise from Denver and Pueblo, both fully sixty miles away. Some smelters in Cripple Creek and Victor could be seen with the naked eye, while the streets of Colorado Springs were but sandy marks like a checkerboard upon the plain.

I descended the peak on foot amid the beauteous scenes of green mountain defiles, where dashing waters sing eternal symphonies amid ferns and flowers, and the song of birds gladden the heart in their sweet echoes from rock to rock.

XXV.

WHERE NATURE IS AT HER BEST.

If one would view the wondrous surroundings of Manitou, in all their grandeur, let him some bright morning stroll up the long yellow road that winds its serpentine course through Williams Canon. A little brook with waters cold and clear as crystal, dashes along its pebbly bed beside the road, murmuring as it were, a song of regret at leaving its enchanted home on its journey to the sea. The road is known as Temple Drive, named so because many towering rocks look, at first glance, like ruined temples of India or of Egypt along the Nile.

At times the road narrows to barely carriage room between great high cliffs, and again abruptly brings the majestic panorama of the canon into view. High above, among the mountain crags is the Cathedral of St. Peter, like a massive ruin whose cornice, column and frescoed walls had fallen with decay

ages past. A little farther and the Ampitheatre rises against the cliffs in hues of brown and yellow, with brighter streaks of golden ochre here and there, which fairly gleam and glisten in the morning sun. High above and in the background on either side are hills of emerald green, studded with cedar and pine, and dotted with flowers of gorgeous color and of form, found elsewhere only in Alpine lands. There are towering rocks that rise a thousand feet above the road, which resemble the ruins of a Moorish citadel. There are towers, mosques and temples, with turrets and battlements, needing only the white-robed figure of the Arab in turban to make one fancy himself suddenly transported to that enchanting and mysterious land of Sultan and slave. No sky of Tangiers was ever deeper, clearer or bluer, and no air of Geneva was ever purer or sweeter.

The road makes a sharp turn and traverses backward nearly half a mile, then turns again and runs in its original direction, climbing the mountain side like a great yellow serpent resting its head a thousand feet among the crags, where eagles build their nests; the white and red painted building that marks the

entrance to the Cave of the Winds, does duty as the serpent's head. From this dizzy point of sight, the great mountain gorge with its grey and brown rocks, and the sloping foothills of green that stretch away to where fair Manitou lies cradled in the valley, form a wondrous panorama.

Eastward, down on the horizon, far as the eye can reach, stretch the mighty plains, westward the higher range of the eternal Rockies, and above all rises the snow-capped summit of Pike's Peak, about whose whitened crest float the fleecy clouds of the soft, still summer morning.

At the entrance of the Cave of the Winds one follows the guide into the dark pathway that leads into the subterranean chambers, where at some remote period a wild mountain cataract has whirled and plunged its maddening waters, in swirl and maelstrom into the black abyss of the earth. One is so suddenly transported from the gladsome and awe-inspiring scenes without, that the lamp and figure of the guide become spectral, his voice sounds in hollow tones and is echoed back from cavernous depths as though titanic monsters were repeating his words.

Knowing the cause, one bursts into a laugh, then the monsters laugh, too, long and loud, and still others take up the laugh, way down the black corridors, and high above in domes, as though all the imps of darkness were there to laugh at one in revenge for intrusion.

The guide flashes a magnesium light and the pilgrim beholds the wonders of Curtain Hall, which nature has ornamented with strangely colored stalactites glistening here and there on the cavern walls, and again where they form a curtain of an intricate work and beauty as though wrought by maiden hands, amid scenes of love and apple blossoms. Mutely you follow the flaring lamp of the guide into the blackness of winding passages and across bridges that span bottomless pits opening into the very breast of the mountain, and when the magnesium light is again flashed, one sees the arching dome of the great canopy hall, its stalactite nymphs, Bed of Cauliflowers, Frescoed Ceiling, Lake Basin, Grandmother's Skillet, Bat's Wing, Prairie Dog Village and Fairy Scene; all presenting a picture weird and ghost-like in the moment of stillness, and heightened by

the demoniacal, fiendish voices that repeat your every word.

On through other crooked subterranean passages where other demons mock the sound of your footsteps, through what the guide calls Boston Avenue, one enters Diamond Hall. The lofty ceiling is decorated its entire length by graceful festoons and wreaths of coral and flowering alabaster. The walls sparkle and scintillate with the rainbow shades, thrown back from the myriad brilliants that stud these walls like diamonds set by hand in some antique mosaic work.

In these regions of darkness you are led by the guide until the Hall of Beauty is lit up to your astonished gaze. Crystal flowers of the most delicate design and exquisite workmanship hang in festoons from every nook and corner. Sparkling incrustations that rival the beauty of Arctic frosts and glitter in the bright light are sparkling on every side. Most wondrous of all there are a million stalactite figures in miniature that appear to be in a pandemonium of outlandish contortions. Maybe, who knows, but what the goblin spirits once lived here and worked out curious things in translucent stone, further down the

black passages of earth and caught a glimpse of our ancestors in some of the great halls of torture way down below, and so reproduced the scene as Jack Frost has been wont to paint the leaves of summer on our frosted window panes.

The Magi of this dark abode, the guide in wide sombrero, black eyed and wearing a mustache fierce as a bandit of the Corsican isle, though harmless as a Kansas Populist, beckons on and leads the way. Here the Bridal Chamber, and there writhing reptiles, dancing devils, monkeys, beasts, birds in every form and riotous posture. Then as the weird wilderness is shut out in semi-darkness, one is inclined to ask of him with lamp and sombrero, "Mister, have I got 'em, or have you?"

The light flashes on Crystal Palace, where gems and jewels bedeck the walls, where huge chrysanthemums or chestnut burrs stand out in bold relief in fadeless crystal flowers moulded from tinted rock, and all seem to mutely plead for recognition as we pass. These silent beauties hidden away under the mountain slopes, where the rays of sun can never reach, speak with the beauty of their

creation, to the soul with as great a love and power as the violet in the sequestered glens.

It is mysterious. It is strange. It is one of those unaccountable things in nature which no man can explain that here in the very bowels of the earth, human scenes have been reproduced and human passions portrayed.

Here perhaps centuries before man's eyes gazed upon the scene, we find in moulded stone, the head of a buffalo, the skeleton of a mastodon, the drapery of a palace, the bride at the altar, the face of sorrow, the Nymphs of Love. War and Poetry are depicted upon these stones.

Once more the light of day, the great chasm beneath, the turquoise skies above, and mighty plains beyond, brings one to the realm of the outer world.

The spectral figure of an hour ago is a pleasant faced young man, who bids you follow the winding path that leads around the mountain side some three hundred yards and which ends at the entrance to the Grand Caverns.

Desiring to see all, you meekly follow another guide through a dark labyrinth and find yourself in the mighty Rotunda of the

Caverns. Here loyal hands have raised monuments to Lee, Grant and McKinley. They are built of fragments of stone cast by visitors to the memory of these heroes. The Imp, the guide, motions on; you are next within a mighty auditorium and as there comes upon you the awful silence and stillness of the hour, you hear musical notes, swelling and cadencing louder and louder until they break in thunderous tones within the cavernous depths, "Nearer, Nearer, My God to Thee." High above, mid the domes of the cavern, the light shows the organist to be playing upon the stalactites which Nature has attuned to the same chords as instruments made by human hands. These stalactites are of crystal, and have the same resonant sound as though they were of finely tempered glass. Up and down the corridors of the cave, through winding passages and circling galleries above, come echoes of "Nearer, My God to Thee," in waves and billows of sound, such as is only heard by artificial means in the Notre Dame of Paris.

Round about somewhere, in one of the chambers, near the entrance, the visitor is shown a human skeleton, as it was found at

the time of the discovery of the cave. It belonged perhaps to that race of men known as the Cliff Dwellers, who once upon a time, when the world was new, lived, loved and reared a race of men in this fair region of the west whom Saxby, a western poet, touches with his magic pen, and beautiifies the tradition of them when he says,

"Dismantled towers and turrets broken,
Like grim war-worn braves who keep
A silent guard with grief unspoken
Watch o'er the graves, by the canon weep,
The nameless graves of a race forgotten
Whose deeds, whose words, whose fate are one
With the mist, long ages past, begotten of the sun."

The sun is now casting his shadows toward the east. From this point of sight we see the Midland trains creeping from tunnels like monster creatures of the Azotic period crawling from their lair. There are green valleys below, and there is also a long serpentine road leading to this side of the mountain by which visitors again reach the pleasant shades of Manitou. Silence, and even sadness, abound in the green-clad mountains be-

yond. They speak in whispers to themselves and you can understand them if you will. They tell you in sweet, soft voices of the song of birds, the lullaby of mountain brooks, and by gentle winds that sing a song of peace through cedar, fir and pine, that the love of nature, is the love of nature's God.

XXVI.

WHEN THE WEST WAS NEW.

Thirty years have passed since I first crossed the plains. The buffalo and antelope have disappeared and in their stead herds of cattle and sheep graze in countless thousands. Farms are tilled where raging fires swept the mighty plains in ungoverned fury; cities and towns rear their spires where once stood Indian tepees. The westward march of civilization has stretched across the continent and redeemed the desert. The soil has been made to yield its harvest and the eternal hills to give up their buried treasure. For the men who made the trails by which these things were done, life's shadows are falling toward the east. They braved the vicissitudes of the western wilderness as heroic as any soldier faced the battlefield; and the trails over which the pioneers slowly made their way across the desert wastes, were blazed with blood and fire. Women,

too, on the frontier, volumes might be written of her sacrifices—Indians, poverty, years of patient toil, far from former home and friends, the luxuries of organized society denied, all for the purpose of earning a home and a competence for declining years.

It was my good fortune to become personally acquainted with many early pioneers of the west and number them among my warmest friends, and as I recall to mind some of their heroic deeds I feel that these chapters would be incomplete without a personal mention of a few of them.

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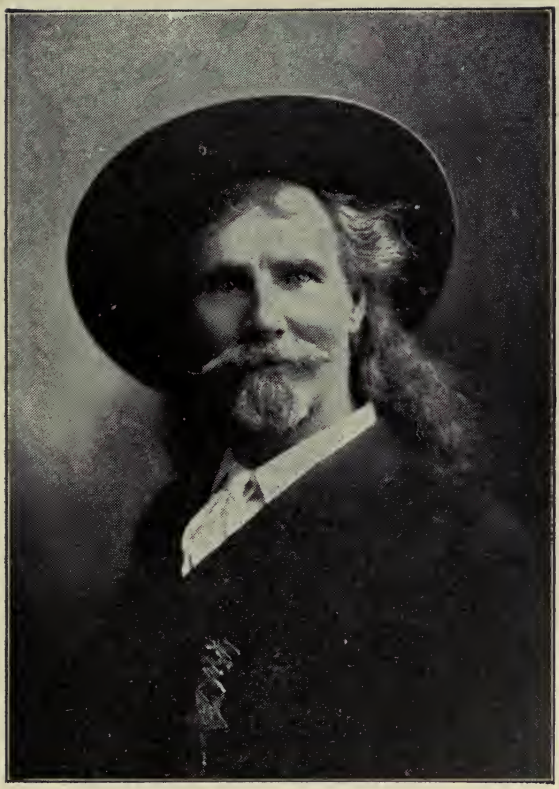
Captain Jack Crawford, the poet scout, is one of those noble characters whose memory will live so long as records exist of the pioneers who braved the vicissitudes of the frontier and made possible our Western civilization of today. A man of broad mind, daring and brave and yet with all the sweet tenderness of a child of nature, he became great by achievements alone. Others have gained a temporary fame by dime novel writers. Captain Jack, in comparison with others, stands



Captain Jack Crawford (page 208).

out as a diamond of the first water. He has helped to make more trails than any scout unless it was Kit Carson. That was before the war. During that struggle he was wounded three times in the service of his country. When the war closed he was for many years chief of scouts under General Custer. He laid out Leedville in the Black Hills in 1876, and was of great service to the government in the settlement of the Indian troubles which succeeded the Custer massacre.

Captain Jack is one of the very few thrown together with the wild, rough element of the frontier who maintained a strictly moral character. I knew him in the "Hills" in 1876 and have known him ever since, and have always found him to be the same genial, wholesouled, brave Captain Jack.

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John McCoach, a pioneer of the sixties, was a among a party near the headwaters of Wind River, Wyoming, in August, 1866, who defeated a thousand warriors with the first Henri rifles used on the plains. The

story is best told in Mr. McCoach's own language.

"Our mule trains consisting of thirty-eight wagons and forty-two men, left Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in April, 1866, for Virginia City, Montana. We were all old soldiers and most of us had seen four years of war and, inured as we were to dangers, we cared but little for the hostile Indians of the plains.

"When we reached Fort Laramie, a big council of Indians was in progress, Chiefs Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, American Horse and others of lesser note were there to demand guns and ammunition from the government, saying they needed them with which to hunt game. Officials of high rank from Washington were there to listen to them and among the newspaper correspondents was Henry M. Stanley, who had been sent out by the New York Herald.

"After days of deliberation the Indians were refused the arms and they broke camp in bad humor.

"Before allowing our party to proceed the commander of the fort had us lined up for an inspection of our arms which were a miscella-

neous collection all the way from an old muzzle-loading rifle to a modern musket. He told us we were too poorly armed to proceed, when the wagon boss took him to some of the wagons and showed him 200 Henri rifles and abundant ammunition which we were freighting to gun dealers in Virginia City. He then allowed us to go.

"I was herding the mules one afternoon near the headwaters of Wind River, when a party of Sioux Indians, led by Little Thunder, made a dash, intending to stampede the animals. One of them carried a rawhide bag containing some pebbles, which made a hideous noise. Despite their efforts, the mules broke for our camp of circled wagons. I tried to shoot the Indian with the rattle bag but missed. Then I dismounted and the next shot I cut the quiver of arrows from his back when he gave a long yell and throwing himself on the side of his pony, got away.

"When I reached camp the rifles had been distributed. We were called from our slumbers the next morning at four o'clock and told to keep quiet and hold our fire.

"With the first gray streak of dawn about one thousand warriors began to encircle us,

riding at full speed and like a great serpent, drawing the coil closer about us with each revolution of the circle. Then the order came and forty-two blazing rifles with eighteen shots to each one dealt out death. Four years of war had taught the men the value of a steady nerve and deliberate aim and before the astonished Indians could retreat the plain was strewn with their dead and wounded.

"These Indians had been at the Fort Laramie council and had seen us drawn up in line with our old assortment of guns for inspection and had counted on us being easy prey. They were the first Henri rifles used on the plains and caused the Indians to speak of us in whispers, as the white men who could load a gun once and then shoot all day. That morning we built our fires with arrows and cooked our breakfast. After that the Indians avoided us as though we were devouring monsters."

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The experience of John McCoach's party in surprising Little Thunder's braves with their Henri rifles, calls to mind a story often

told in Fort Laramie of how General W. S. Harney fooled these same Sioux Indians under Little Thunder a few years previous to their attack on the McCoach outfit. Jake Smith, a soldier with General Harney in the 60's thus relates the story:

"General Harney established his headquarters in Leavenworth, Kansas. Little Thunder was at the head of the Sioux and sent word that he was willing either to fight or shake hands with the white soldier. Harney replied that if the Indian was without choice in the matter it might as well be fight; besides, as he remembered his orders, he was to whip some one. So Harney met Little Thunder and about a thousand war men on the North Platte in Nebraska. He whipped them good and some of the Indians' friends back East tried to make trouble for Harney because he had not had a long preliminary confab with Little Thunder. That Sioux band was a mild-mannered set long after Harney went back to Leavenworth.

"It was after this fight that Harney threw the Society for the Protection of Western Savages into a particular frenzy. The wagon trail for Oregon and California led from Fort

Leavenworth to Fort Kearney, Neb., then to Julesburg, in Colorado, from there to Fort Laramie, through old South Pass to Badger and then to Salt Lake. The trip by ox train took about one hundred days with good luck. I know of a party that was on the road 300 days, delayed by Indians and then snowbound. That wasn't a pleasant winter for a boy of 16.

"Every now and then a band of Sioux would ride up to an ox train, kill if they felt like it and always drive away the stock. Soldiers would be sent out and have the pleasure of following the Indians' trail until the weather would make winter quarters necessary. Harney started from Leavenworth after one band, taking about 400 cavalrymen, or dragoons. The Indians loafed along ahead of him till they reached the mountains, and then Harney turned back. It was the old story, the Sioux said, and their scouts followed the soldiers until they were well into Kansas. Then the Sioux knew the country was clear for new operations.

"Harney stopped on the Blue River in Northern Kansas near where Marysville now stands. A wagon train reached there from

Leavenworth and Harney had all the freight unloaded—simply siezed the train—then he put 400 soldiers into those wagons and in two were mountain guns. The great covers were pulled close and leaving a guard over the abandoned freight and horses, Harney started on his journey as a bull-whacker. Not a soldier or officer was permitted to put his head from under a cover in the day time, and only at night a few got leave to stretch their legs. All day they sat in those wagon beds, hot and dusty, playing cards, fighting and chewing tobacco for pastime.

"There were twenty-six of those wagons and they trailed along as if they were carrying dead freight; no faster nor slower than the ordinary freighters, and making camp at the usual places, forming the usual corral of wagons and herding stock at night. The train reached Fort Kearny and slowly went across the South Platte to Julesburg. Occasional Indian signs made Harney have hope.

"The outfit was seventy miles on the way to Laramie when the big day came, and it came quick. Behind them on the trail the men on the outside saw a war party—some say there were five hundred Indians in it.

Even if they hadn't been painted the fact that they were without women or children would have told the story. The train made the usual preparations for an Indian attack, throwing the wagons into a circle, or more of an ellipse, and unhooking the five lead yokes to each wagon. A front wheel of each wagon touched a hind wheel of the one in front and the tongues were turned to the outside. At the front end of the corral an opening about fifteen feet wide was left, but at the rear the opening into the corral was about fifty feet wide. That, also, was according to the freighters' methods; after a night camp the cattle would be driven into the corral through the big end to be yoked for the day.

"Harney didn't have time to drive his oxen into the corral, or else he didn't want to. Only the five yoke of leaders were unhooked and they were then chained to the front wheel of their wagon. The space in the corral was all clear for the Indians, whose method of attacking a wagon train was to rush into the corral and do their shooting. They were a happy lot of braves this day; the war band started for the train when the corral was forming; they spread out like a fan and then

came together again and started for the big opening as hard as their war ponies could carry them. A whooping, variegated mob with no more clothes than the paint gave it fell into the corral and then real fun began.

"Those soldiers, who had been sweating under canvas for a few weeks wanted excitement and revenge. The tarpaulins went up and they shot down into that mess of braves as fast as they could load. The two mountain guns completed the surprise and the bucks hardly fired a shot before their ponies were climbing over one another to get out the way they came. It was the only real Indian panic. When the last Sioux brave able to ride disappeared across the prairie there was a big mess to clean up. In those days the Indians needed school all the year around. However, one old buck, a little chief, seemed to be impressed. He was near a mountain gun when the fire opened. 'Harney is the man who shot wagons at us,' is the way he told about it years later.

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Charles S. Stroble, "Mountain Charley," known as the cowboy painter, was adopted by

the Ute Indians at the age of nineteen. I have often heard him tell the following experience:

"It was the most marvelous instance of daredevil bravery I ever witnessed. It happened in 1866 when I was living with the Utes west of the range in Middle Park, Colorado. They had adopted me a year or so before when I was twenty years of age. My name in Ute was Paghaghet, which means 'long-haired.'

"It was at this time that the old feud between the Utes and Arapahoes was at its height. Our scouts found theArapahoes coming in from North Park in the endeavor to surprise some of the Utes' hunting parties. Our runners having come in and informed us, we soon collected a war party and started north to intercept our enemies.

"I was with the scouting party which went in advance, and I was the only white man in the entire tribe. We found the sign left by their scouts, and then concealed ourselves until our war party could come up. As soon as reinforcements arrived we deployed on either side of a gulch or canon, with our horses hid-

den away among the rocks and timber in charge of horse-holders.

"We had not waited long when we sighted the advance of the Arapahoes down below us in the gulch. We were unnoticed, because we left no tracks in the gulch and had deployed some distance below.

"When the main body of the enemy had passed our place of concealment we opened fire on them from each side of the gulch, and they, not knowing our numbers, were panic-stricken. They wheeled and came tumbling back up the gulch in great confusion, and all the time subjected to our fire. To be sure, they were returning the fire wherever they caught sight of us, but we had by far the best of them and peppered them hotly.

"The Utes got about eight scalps, as the Arapahoes, although they carried their wounded with them in their flight, were in too big a hurry to look after the dead.

"My Indian brother, Paah, or 'Black Tailed Deer,'' and Wangbich, the 'Antelope,' were with me behind some sheltering rocks, and on each side of me. As the Arapahoes were scurrying away through the canon below we noticed particularly one fine-looking

young buck, wearing a splendid war bonnet, which flaunted bravely in the breeze. This fellow was singled out by Paah. At the crack of his rifle the Arapahoe threw out his arms and fell backward from his pony and the pony galloped away.

"Paah, elated at the success of his shot, dropped his rifle and plunged down the steep side of the canon, which ran up here at an angle of about forty-five degrees, the other Indians passing all the time and letting loose at him a fusillade of rifle shots and flights of arrows. At length Paah got to his dead Arapahoe, planted his foot on the back of the man's neck, grasped both scalplock and side braids, gave them a turn on his wrist and with the aid of his knife secured the full scalp.

"Then seizing the war bonnet, he came tearing up the side of the gulch, his trophies in one hand and his knife held dagger wise in the other, to assist him in making the steep ascent.

"The arrows and bullets flew thickly about him, but, marvelous to tell, he arrived on the little flat space back of us without a scratch. Waving his bloody spoils above his head he essayed to give the Ute yell of victory, but

he was so exhausted that he was only able to let out a funny squeak as he fell prostrate to avoid the shots that were now pouring in our direction. Wangbich and I covered him the best we could by emptying our six-shooters at the Arapahoes, and he finally succeeded in crawling to shelter.

"On the return of our war expedition to the principal village we celebrated our victory in royal style. The Utes from other villages kept pouring in, and there was dancing afternoon and night for many days. This chief village was located under some high rocks on the Grand river, near a hot spring. The principal feature of the celebration was a scalp parade, a gorgeous affair in which all kinds of silvered ornaments, feathered and beaded costumes were worn. I afterward painted this splendid scene as it appeared to me and the picture is now hanging in the Iroquois club in Chicago."

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"Possibly my experience in the bullwhacking days across the plains," says George P. Marvin, "does not materially differ from

that of other men who piloted six yoke of cattle hitched to eighty hundred of freight across the desert. Yet there were many incidents connected with life upon the plains that have never been written.

"There was scarcely a day passed but something occurred that would furnish material upon which the writer of romance could build an interesting book of adventures.

"In the freighting days of the early '60's, the overland trail up the Platte River was a broad road 200 or more feet in width. This was reached from various Missouri River points, as a great trunk line of railroad is now supplied by feeders. From Leavenworth, Atchison and St. Joe, those freighters who went the northern route crossed the Blue River at Marysville, Kansas, Oketo and other points, and traveled up the Little Blue, crossing over the divide and striking the big road at Dogtown, ten miles east of Fort Kearney. From Nebraska City, which was the principal freighting point upon the river from '64 until the construction of the Union Pacific railroad. What was known as the Steam Wagon road was the great trail. This feeder struck the Platte at a point about

forty miles east of Kearney. It derived its name from an attempt to draw freight wagons over it by the use of steam, after the manner of the traction engine of today.

"My first trip across the plains was over this route, which crossed the Big Blue a few miles above the present town of Crete, Nebraska. At the Blue crossing we were 'organized,' a detachment of soldiers being there for that purpose, and no party of less than thirty men was permitted to pass. Under this organization, which was military in its character, we were required to remain together, to obey the orders of our 'captain,' and to use all possible precaution against the loss of our scalps and the freight and cattle in our care.

"The daily routine of the freighter's life was to get up at the first peep of dawn, yoke up and if possible get 'strung out' ahead of other trains, for there was a continuous stretch of white covered wagons as far as the eye could reach.

"With the first approach of day, the night herder would come to camp and call the wagon boss. He would get up, pound upon each wagon and call the men to 'turn out,'

and would then mount his saddle mule and go out and assist in driving in the cattle.

"The corral was made by arranging the wagons in a circular form, the front wheel of one wagon interlocking with the hind wheel of the one in front of it. Thus two half circles were formed with a gap at either end. Into this corral the cattle were driven and the night herder watched one gap and the wagon boss the other, while the men yoked up.

"The first step in the direction of yoking up was to take your lead yoke upon your shoulder and hunt up your off leader. Having found your steer you put the bow around his neck and with the yoke fastened to him, lead him to the wagon, where he was fastened to the wheel by a chain. You then took the other bow and led your near leader with it to his place under the yoke. Your lead chain was then hooked to the yoke and laid over the back of the near leader, and the other cattle were hunted up and yoked in the same manner until the wheelers were reached. Having the cattle all yoked, you drove them all out, chained together, and hitched them to the wagon.

"The first drive in the morning would

probably be to 10 o'clock, or later, owing to the weather and distance between favorable camping grounds. Cattle were then unyoked and the men got their first meal of the day. The cattle were driven in and yoked for the second drive any time from 2 to 4 o'clock, the time of starting being governed by the heat, two drives of about five to seven hours each being made each day. The rate of travel was about two miles an hour, or from 20 to 25 miles a day, the condition of the roads and the heat governing.

"This, then, was the regular daily routine, though the yoking up of cattle was often attended with difficulty. Many freighting trains started from the Missouri river with not more than two yoke of cattle in the six that comprised each team, that had ever worn a yoke before. Many had to be 'roped,' and not a few of the wildest, as the Texas and Cherokee varieties, were permitted to wear their yokes continually, for weeks.

"While the bull-whacker's life was full of that adventure and romance that possessed its fascination, there were some very rough sides to it, though taking it all in all, it afforded an experience that few indeed would

part with, and in after years there is nothing that I recall with more genuine pleasure than life in the camps upon the plains during the freighting days.

"In an aggregation of men such as manned the prairie schooners of thirty odd years ago there were some very peculiar characters. This was especially true of those old 'Desert Tars,' who for the time made bullwacking a profession and who were never so happy as when swinging a twenty-foot whip over a string of steers.

"These droll people bore nicknames suggested by characteristics or conditions, and there were few indeed who responded to any other name, in fact, I have been intimately associated with men about the camp fire for months and never knew their real name.

"A tall, slender person might be known as 'Lengthy' or 'Slim'; a short, stout one as 'Shorty' or 'Stub-and-Twist.' We had in one of our trains 'Kentuck,' who happened to hail from the Blue Grass State, also 'Sucker Ike,' who was from Illinois; 'Buckeye Bill' was from Ohio, while 'Hawkeye Hank' was from Iowa. 'Hoosier Dave' was from Posey County, while 'Yank' hailed from the far east;

'Mormon Jack' was an old-time bullwhacker who used to pass himself off for a Mormon when it suited his convenience; 'Bishop Lee' also played Mormon when we were over in the Salt Lake Valley; the man with red or auburn hair was invariably called 'Reddy,' 'Sandy' or 'Pinky,' while another whose facial architecture was of the Romanesque style would be called 'Nosey.'

"These quaint characters would place a 'Wild West' comedy upon the boards without much acting. The costumes varied as much as their names. Some wore flannel shirts, some cotton of any and all colors, while others dressed in drilling jumpers. Their pants or overalls were held up by a belt, as suspenders were unknown. One character that was with us for a year or more, was a man called 'Scotty,' a native of Scotland, and a sailmaker by trade. He used to mend and patch his clothes and the clothes of the other boys, until it was difficult to tell the original goods. His strong point was 'foxing' clothes with canvas which he always carried for that purpose. He would take a new pair of pants and 'fox' them with white canvas, putting large patches over the knees, around the

knees, around the pockets, in the seat and crotch, until they looked real artistic. He usually 'pinked' the edges of his patches or 'foxing,' and I have known the boys to pay his as much as $5 for 'foxing' a pair of heavy wool pants with duck.

"By way of entertainment, every man could play a part. One could tell a good yarn, while another could sing a song, and all could play 'freeze-out.'

The songs sang about the campfires were not such as are rendered by opera companies of the present day. In fact, they have gone into disuse since the men who sang them and the occasion that gave them birth, have passed into history.

"Among the popular melodies of the time was 'Betsey from Pike.' The first verse ran like this:

" 'Oh, do you remember sweet Betsey, from
Pike,
Who traveled the mountains with her lover,
Ike;
With one yoke of cattle, a large yellow dog,
One full shanghai rooster and one spotted
hog.'

Chorus—

" 'Sing a Tu-ral Li-ural, Li-ural Li-a,
Sing a Tu-ral Li-ural, Li-ural, Li-a,
Sing a Tu-ral Li-ural, Li-ural, Li-a,
Why don't you sing Tu-ral, Li-ural Li-a.'

"The chorus, when joined by twenty or more bullwhackers who always carried their lungs with them, was indeed thrilling, as was the last stanza, in fact every stanza from the first to the last,

"The last verse ran like this:

" 'The wagon broke down and the cattle all died,
That morning the last piece of bacon was fried.
Ike looked discouraged, and Betsey was mad,
The dog dropped his tail and looked wonderfully sad.'

"Another popular air of the day was:

" 'My name is Joe Bowers,
I had a brother Ike;
We came from old Missouri,
All the way from Pike,
Etc., Etc.'

"A song sang by a California miner who went by the euphonious sobriquet of "Sluice

Box,'' never failed to elicit encore. It was descriptive of his adversities and trials through the sluice mining country, and the last lines that I remember were:

" 'I stole a dog, got whipped like hell,
And away I went for Marysville.
Then leave, ye miners, leave,
Oh, leave, ye miners, leave.'

''Then the boys used to sandwich in Irish, German and negro melodies, besides drawing upon national and war songs. Among the latter, 'John Brown' and 'Dixie' were quite popular, but any song with a good, stiff chorus was the proper thing.

''A parody on the 'Texas Ranger' was also a popular song, though not so lively and inspiring as the others, being lacking in a chorus. It was a sort of lament of a boy who at the age of eighteen ran away, 'joined Old Major's train,' and started for Laramie. They had a fight at Plum Creek, in which six of their men were killed by the Indians and buried in one grave. In his description of the fight he says:

" 'We saw the Indians coming,
They came up with a yell,

My feeling that moment
No human tongue can tell.

"'I thought of my old mother,
In tears she said to me:
"To you they're all strangers;
You'd better stay with me."

"'I thought her old and childish,
Perhaps she did not know
My mind was fixed on driving,
And I was bound to go.'

"'We fought them full one hour
Before the fight was o'er,
And the like of dead Indians
I never saw before;'

"'And six as brave fellows
As ever came out West,
Were buried up at Plum-Creek,
Their souls in peace to rest."

"In this connection I may say that less than thirty rods from the place where those six brave bullwhackers are buried, eleven others lie in one grave, killed by Indians.

"The last time that I passed over the road at Plum Creek was in the spring of 1867. The railroad had been built beyond that point

on the north side of the river, and the stage line had just been pulled off.

"Bands of Indians were quite troublesome and as the little troop of soldiers stationed at Plum Creek had been removed, the station keeper had been frightened away, and the sole occupant of the place was a telegraph operator. I talked with him as we watched the Indians over on the hill and there was a picture of despair written upon his every feature. We told him that he ought not to stay and insisted upon his taking his traps and going with us. He wanted to, but felt it his duty to remain in charge of the telegraph office. I will never forget the parting with that man. He was a perfect stranger. I never saw him before, didn't even know his name, and our acquaintance only covered a few hours, but there was something terrible in the look of anxiety that he gave us as he refused to leave his post.

"We were the last white men that that poor fellow ever looked upon. Even as our train pulled out the Indians were in sight upon the hills south of the station, and that evening they burned the station, and nothing was ever heard of the Plum Creek operator,

who, knowing the fate that awaited him, remained at his post and was massacred by the merciless Sioux."

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The frontier preacher had his share alike with others in hardship and adventure, as will be seen by the experience of the Rev. H. T. Davis.

"We said to the authorities of our church: 'We would like to go west and spend our lives in laying the foundations and building up the church on the frontier.' The way was at once opened, and in July, 1858, we landed at Bellevue, Nebraska. This was our first field of labor. We had no church organization here at that time, so everything had to be made from the raw material. Notwithstanding this was the case, we really enjoyed the work.

"We shall never forget the first Nebraska blizzard we encountered. The day before was beautiful almost like a summer day. Mrs. Davis had washed and hung out her clothes. We retired to rest, the soft balmy air, like a zephyr, was blowing from the south. About midnight the wind shifted to

the north and it began to snow. In the morning the weather was freezing cold and the snow was piled in drifts many feet high around the house. We looked out and saw the clothes line but no clothes. We tried to find them, but in vain. They were gone. Not a shred was left save one or two small pieces. And we never saw or heard of them again. Our neighbors who were acquainted with Nebraska blizzards said: 'Your clothes were in Kansas long before morning.' Our wardrobe was not the most extensive, and we felt keenly the loss. Since then we have encountered many a blizzard, and we are never surprised at the awful havoc and devastation that follow in their wake.

"Another thing that occurred that same winter we shall never forget. Although forty-one years have passed away since it took place, it stands out as vividly before us now as though it had happened but yesterday. The thought of that thrilling event even now causes our blood to tingle, our nerves to quiver, our heart to throb, and a lump to come into our throat, that produces anything but a pleasing sensation.

"It was a race for life. We had friends

in Omaha and we determined to go to visit them. The Missouri river is frozen over in the winter, and of course, is unnavigable. The whistle of the locomotive had never been heard on the prairies of Nebraska. The only way left for us to reach Omaha was by private conveyance. We procured a horse and sleigh for the purpose. After visiting a few days in Omaha we started home.

"The day selected for our return was bright and clear. The snow was deep, and the weather bitter cold. The brilliant rays of the sun caused the snow in the road, on plain and hillside, to sparkle and glitter, and the whole country as far as the eye could extend shone like burnished silver. By my side, in the sleigh, sat my wife. It was our first winter in the territory. Everything was new and strange and wild, altogether different from anything we had ever seen before. The absence of timber made the snow-covered hills and plains appear dreary in the extreme, and created a feeling of loneliness that cannot be easily described.

"After we had gone a few miles, looking back, my wife saw away in the distance an animal.

"'What is that?' said she, somewhat agitated. I turned and looked. It was so far away I could not for the life of me distinguish just what it was. I replied: 'Oh, nothing but a dog from one of the farms by the wayside.'

"But if it were only a dog I feared it. I never had any particular love for the canine race. And if that were only a dog my wife saw away in the distance I was extremely anxious to keep out of his way. So I urged my horse a little.

"Reaching the top of the next hill my wife again looked back. Then she tucked the robe more closely about her. I looked into her face. She looked troubled and seemed quite nervous, but said nothing. I turned my head, and there in the road, away in the distance, I saw the same object. It seemed to be gaining on us. Again I urged my horse, encouraging him all I possibly could. A peculiar feeling instantly crept all over me. It was a strange sensation. My hand trembled and the whip quivered as I held it.

"The fact had flashed over me that the object seen in the road behind us was not a dog but a buffalo wolf. The buffalo wolf of Ne-

braska was the same as the giant wolf of Oregon. It was the largest species of the gray wolf, and often attacked and killed buffaloes and on that account was called by trappers, Indian traders and the early pioneers of the west the 'buffalo wolf.' These wolves, when hungry, did not hesitate to attack man. They were large, strong, savage and dangerous in the extreme. I knew very well if it were one of these that had scented us out, and was on our trail, and should overtake us, there would be no hope whatever for our escape. The only hope of saving our lives was to reach the village before we were overtaken. Knowing how fleet of foot the wolf was, the hope seemed a forlorn one. I knew that not one moment's time could be lost—that my horse must be pushed to the last extremity of his strength. I tried to keep cool and not become frightened, but in vain. No one under such circumstances can keep from being frightened.

"Silently we breathed a prayer to God for help. How natural it is to pray when in danger. Under such cimcumstances all men pray, believers in the Christian religion and unbelievers. All alike at times feel the need

of supernatural help, and at such times call upon God for assistance. If at no other time, when in great danger, we pray—pray earnestly.

"Seeing the wolf was rapidly gaining on us, I spoke sharply to my horse, and plied the whip anew. Faster and faster he flew over the hardened snow, and faster and faster our hearts beat with fear. The snow clods flew thick and fast from the hoofs of our flying steed. To these, however, we paid but little attention. Reaching the next rise, again we looked back, and to our surprise the wolf was nearer than ever. I felt that the only thing to do was to urge the horse until every nerve and muscle were taxed to their utmost tension. Our panting steed seemed to take in the situation, and if ever an animal made fast time it was our noble horse on that cold December day. Again my wife turned her anxious eyes toward our rapidly approaching foe and every time she looked back the trouble on her face deepened. She said nothing. Not a word was spoken. Her look, however, spoke volumes. My heart leaped into my throat, and I was too much frightened to speak.

"Up one hill and down, then up another and down our galloping horse carried us. Again we turned our faces to the rear, and again were thrilled anew with fear. The wolf was only a short distance behind. The time had come when it seemed there must be a hand to hand grapple with the savage beast of prey. The top of the next hill was reached, and in full view, only a few rods away, rose the beautiful village of Bellevue. Descending the slope we looked back. The wolf had just reached the brow of the hill, and seeing the village, stopped for a moment, then turned aside. A moment afterwards our panting horse drove up to the parsonage and we were safe. A prayer of thanksgiving went up to God for deliverance.

"Forty-one years have passed away since that eventful ride on the bleak prairies of Nebraska, but that race for life is as fresh on memory's page as if it had taken place but yesterday.

"We have seen with our own eyes the buffalo path transformed into the public highway and the Indian trail to the railroad, with its fiery steed snuffing the breeze and sweeping with lightning speed from the Missouri

River to the gold-washed shores of the Pacific."

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One of the hottest, bloodiest little fights on American soil occurred at Beecher Island, seventeen miles south of Wray, Colorado, September 17, 1868, which Thomas Murphy, of Corbin, Kansas, had the honor of selecting as the place of defense.

Forsyth's Rough Riders, numbering fifty-four men, made as heroic a stand as the defenders of the Alamo, and from their rifle pits on the "Island of Death," in the Arickaree fork of the Republican River, defeated 1,000 Cheyenne Indians, in which their chief, Roman Nose, was killed.

At that time the Cheyennes were a devastating horde that swept over the plains of Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado. Major George A. Forsyth, who was with Sheridan on his ride from Winchester, and who has since become a general, was given permission by that general to organize a force against the marauding Indians. This he did, choosing a small body of picked men from plains-

men, hunters and ex-soldiers from Ft. Harker and Ft. Hayes.

Mr. Murphy recently gave me the following account of the fight.

On the 15th of September our little band of troopers arrived in the valley of the Arickaree and on the following morning at daybreak we were attacked by a rifle fire from the Indians, who had us almost surrounded. There was only one way out for retreat, but Major Forsyth shrewdly decided that it was done for the purpose of ambush, and instead of falling into the trap, took position on the small island in the river. We used our tin cups and plates to dig rifle pits in the sand. Our horses were hitched to the young cottonwoods on the island.

Roman Nose apparently had us in a trap. His riflemen were posted on the banks on either side of the island and poured a galling fire into the rifle pits all that day. Lieutenant Frederick H. Beecher, a nephew of the illustrious Henry Ward Beecher, was killed at the side of Major Forsyth. Dr. Mooers was hit in the forehead and mortally wounded. Several of the most valuable scouts also fell and many were wounded. Toward the

close of the day Major Forsyth was wounded near unto death, but when merciful night came he rallied the men and gave directions for the fight the next morning.

At daybreak the second day Roman Nose led in person fully one thousand warriors on horseback, who rode up the shallow waters of the stream to attack the rifle pits. The charge was a magnificent one, but we poured volley after volley into their midst until Roman Nose fell and they retreated in confusion.

A second charge was made at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, but there was no longer a great war chief in command and the Indians broke within two hundred yards of the rifle pits. At 6 o'clock at night they made another charge from all sides, but our men deliberately picked them off before they set foot on the island, until the waters of the river were red with blood. The place was a very hornet's nest to the Indians and they withdrew baffled.

The casualties now amounted to twenty-three killed and wounded out of fifty-four men. Ammunition was running low and we were out of provisions, but there was plenty

of horse meat, for our mounts had nearly all been killed. When darkness had settled down volunteers were called for to carry the news of our predicament to Fort Wallace. Peter Trudeau and Jack Stillwell volunteered. They skilfully ran the enemy's lines and brought relief seven days later.

Meanwhile the sufferings of the men were terrible. The horse meat had become putrid and unfit to eat. The days were hot and the nights were cold, and there was no surgeon to alleviate the sufferings of the sick and wounded.

Major Forsyth had given up hope of relief and begged us to leave him and cut our way out, but we said, "No, we have fought together, and if need be, we will die together." When relief came some of the men wept for joy.

It was I who suggested the island as a place of defense at the first attack. It was seconded by Jack Stillwell.

A reunion of Forsyth's men was held on the historic island September 17, 1905, when a monument given by the state of Colorado and the state of Kansas was unveiled, bearing

the names of all who participated in that famous fight.

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"It seems to me people were happier in Colorado City in early days than now," said J. B. Sims, a pioneer of the sixties.

"At Christmas times we had shooting matches, a horse race or two, plenty of Tom and Jerry, and usually wound up the day with a dance at the Anway Fort and a supper at Smith and Baird's hotel. Often half a dozen families would arrange a friendly dinner at some neighbor's house, and the hotel men would make a big dinner and invite the ranchmen to come in and enjoy the festivities.

"The pious people who were averse to horse-racing would generally pitch horseshoes and sometimes end the day in a big game of draw poker. There was not much money in circulation, and the betting on a horse race was commonly a sack of flour, a side of bacon or a shotgun.

"No, we never hung the horsethieves on Christmas. Those festivities were held until

the new year, so as to start the community off with good resolutions.

"A premonition of danger warned me once of lurking hostile Indians on Cottonwood Creek on the morning of December 26, 1868, resulting in a preparation for battle that probably saved my life.

"It was the day after Christmas. I was in the employ of the Beatty Brothers Cattle Company and was looking up some stray cattle near the head of the Cottonwood Creek, twenty miles north of Colorado City.

"I had been riding through the timber and was about to emerge into the open when a premonition of danger came over me. The feeling was so strong that I loosened my Henri rifle from the saddle holster and looked to the two heavy Colt revolvers I carried about me.

"Half an hour passed and while I had not yet seen anything, I could not shake off the feeling of approaching danger. Twenty minutes more and sure enough, from out of a ravine came about sixty Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians in their war paint, riding rapidly toward me.

"I instantly wheeled my horse and rode for

a rocky butte about half a mile distant. My horse climbed the butte almost with the agility of a goat. As the bullets tore up the ground about us I led him behind some big rocks and then paid my respects to the advancing war party.

"My Henri rifle carried eighteen shots. The repeating rifle being then unheard of by these Indians, was the greatest surprise they ever met. My first shot emptied a saddle, and then when they thought to rush me, two or three more went down. They could not understand the rapidity of my fire, and by the time I had emptied my rifle I had them on the run and out of range.

"They advanced two or three times during the day and I became amused and allowed them to come within easy range, when I would turn loose as fast as I could work the rifle, and scatter them.

"Late in the afternoon they gave me up as bad medicine and rode away toward Gomer's hill, where they killed a Mexican boy. They then swung back toward Palmer Lake and killed Mrs. Teeterman, who chanced to be alone on a ranch near the headwaters of Plumb Creek.

"From that day I have never doubted the existence of an unseen power which may warn us of approaching danger."

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Antelope Jack, bronzed and grey, a grim warrior of the early frontier days, who made his home in Colorado City off and on for many years, would respond to no other name, whatever it may have been.

No one appeared to care much for old Jack, but Jack had a history that would have made him an idol in certain circles, for in 1874 he was one of the fourteen men who fought the Battle of Adobe Walls in northwest Texas, one of the fiercest fought on the plains.

Long before Napoleon signed the Louisiana purchase treaty, and while all the vast territory lying south of it belonged to Mexico, a party of traders from Santa Fe established a fort in northwest Texas. It was of adobe or sun dried brick and had stood deserted in that arid region, almost intact, for perhaps more than one hundred years.

In 1874, when the extermination of the buffalo had become a military necessity in or-

der to deprive the Indian of his commissary on his marauding expeditions, a party of buffalo hunters took up headquarters in the adobe walls and it being in the heart of the buffalo country, others came, and it was soon made a trading post.

The Comanches, Arapahoes and Apaches, ever jealous of their domain, formed a federation and proceeded against the settlements of northwest Texas and Kansas. A raid was planned on Adobe Walls. The time set for the attack was early dawn, when it was expected the men would be asleep.

The men, not apprehensive of danger, were asleep with the doors open, but "Bat" Masterson rose early that morning and upon going to the stream for water, caught sight of the advancing horde.

The men were quickly alarmed and the doors fastened. Two men asleep on the outside in wagons were killed.

The Indians rode their ponies up to the heavy doors and threw them on their haunches against them. The men inside barricaded the doors with sacks of flour and fired through loopholes in the faces of the savages, who numbered about five hundred.

The battle raged all day and dead Indians and ponies were piled up to within a few feet of the doors.

One young brave, painted and bedecked with feathers, gained the roof and tore away the adobe covering until he could reach through with his revolver, which he fired at random below, filling the room with smoke. He was killed before he emptied his weapon. There were only fourteen guns of the defenders and at times every one had to be brought into action to resist the renewed attack against the doors.

Finally the doors parted until there was a wide aperture on both sides through which the Indians fired as they rode past, or hurled their arrows and lances.

Fixed ammunition was running low, but there was an abundance of powder, bullets and primers for reloading shells. Men were detailed for this work so that there was a volcano of fire belching from the fort all day.

Meanwhile, Minimic, the medicine man of the tribes, who had planned the fight, rode at a safe distance, urging on the Indians, saying

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the medicine he had made was good and they could not fail.

Finally, late in the day, his horse was hit by a sharpshooter and with this the Indians lost faith and withdrew.

"I was only busy like the rest," was all Antelope Jack would say of his courage on that day.

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The massacre at the White River Indian agency in Colorado, and the ambuscade of Major Thornburg's command by Utes in 1879, was the last of the serious troubles with the Indians in Colorado.

It was the cause, however, of a reign of terror on the plains, as it was thought to be the signal for a general uprising.

When the news reached the C. C. Ranch on the Cimarron River, I was especially interested in the fate of E. W. Eskridge, an employe of the White River agency, who I would have joined within a short time, had the terrible affair resulting in his death not occurred.

I have never met any of the soldiers under Major Thornburg's command, nor any settlers who were in the vicinity at the time, and the best account I have been able to get of the massacre is the following by an unknown writer:

"The White River Utes had been ugly for some time, and had prepared for an outbreak. They committed many depredations among the settlers and cherished resentment against the agent, Mr. Meeker. Only an hour before the attack upon the agency by Chief Douglass and twenty braves Meeker dispatched a message to Major Thornburg, known to be en route, in which he said:

" 'Everything is quiet here and Douglass is flying the United States flag.'

"At that hour Thornburg lay dead in Milk River canon, on the reservation. The writer was cruelly slain and mutilated within an hour, and the messenger, E. W. Eskridge, who carried the note, was shot down before he had proceeded two miles from the agency.

"The attack on Thornburg was made at 10 o'clock on the morning of September 29. When the news reached Chief Douglass by courier he at once proceeded to execute his

portion of the plot. He and his men went to the agency and began firing upon the employes, continuing until all were killed. The women, who were Mrs. Meeker, her daughter Josephine, Mrs. Price, wife of the agency blacksmith, and her little girl three years old, ran to the milkhouse and shut themselves in while the massacre went on. After the bloody work was completed the building was fired and they were forced out, to be taken captives.

"Meeker's body was found a week later 200 yards from his house, with a logchain about his neck, one side of his head mashed and a barrel stave driven through his body. Eight other bodies were found near by and four more on the road to the agency. The Indians stole all movable goods and packing the plunder on ponies fled, taking with them the captives. Through the influence and peremptory intervention of Ouray, head chief of the Ute nation, and after troublesome negotiations, Chief Douglass surrendered the captives, who were taken to Ouray's home, on the Southern Ute reservation, and reached Denver in November.

"Major Thornburg's command, consisting

of one company of the Fourth Infantry, Troop E, Third Cavalry, and Troops D and F, Fifth Cavalry, left Fort Steele, Wyoming, on the Union Pacific railroad, and marched over the mountains toward the agency to aid in quelling the threatened outbreak, but the Utes struck before the troops reached their destination and also intercepted and ambushed the command.

"When the troops reached Bear River, sitxy-five miles from the agency, they were visited in camp by Chief Captain Jack and several braves, who were most friendly, and were entertained at supper by Major Thornburg. The object of this call was to size up the force and to learn the route to be taken by the troops the next day. They offered to guide the troops to the agency, but this was declined.

"The next morning about 10 o'clock, while the troops were in a narrow canon at the crossing of Milk River, fire suddenly opened upon them from the bluffs on all sides. No Indians could be seen, but bullets poured and smoke puffed from behind the rocks. Major Thornburg was killed while in front of his men.

"Troop D was half a mile in the rear of the other troops with the wagon train at the time of the attack, and Lieutenant J. V. S. Paddock, in command, at once formed his wagons into a barricade and the other troops fell back to the improvised breastworks, where for six days the soldiers were besieged and nearly all their animals killed. On the morning of October 2 Captain Dodge, with a troop of the Ninth Cavalry, colored, who had been on his way to the agency, reinforced the beleaguered men, but his force was not large enough to aid in repulsing the Utes. The first night Private Murphy of D troop volunteered to go through the lines for assistance. The heroic trooper made the ride to Rawlins, Wyo., a distance of 170 miles, in 24 hours, and telegraphed for help.

"News of the plight of the Thornburg command reached Fort Russell on the morning of October 1, and General Wesley Merritt immediately ordered a relief expedition. Four troops of the Fifth Cavalry started at once to Rawlins by train, reaching there at 1 o'clock the next morning, where they were joined by four companies of the Fourth In-

fantry, and the troops began their long march to the relief of their comrades.

"At dawn on the third day, with General Merritt ahead with the cavalry, the troops entered the valley of death and were greeted with cheers by the exhausted victims of treachery. The cowardly Utes withdrew when reinforcements arrived, and the troops were unable to follow them through the mountain trails.

"On the road to Milk River the relief party came upon the remains of a wagon train which had been bound for the agency with supplies. All the men were murdered, stripped and partly burned. After General Merritt reached the agency Lieutenant W. B. Weir, of the ordnance department, while out on a scouting expedition, was surrounded by Utes and killed.

"Of Major Thornburg's command thirteen were killed and forty-eight wounded.

"Although the government made a long investigation of the Meeker and Thornburg massacres none of the leaders was ever punished. The only action taken was the re-

moval of the White River Utes to a new reservation in Utah by an act of congress."

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In conclusion, we do not have to go to the annals of the past, nor to distant shores to find heroes and heroines. They are in our midst today. A nobler band of men and women never graced this planet than many of the men and women who laid the foundations of the state and the church on the frontier of the west.

Some of them lived in sod houses and dugouts, with barely enough to keep soul and body together, and for years had hard work to keep the wolf from the door. But they toiled on, undismayed by their hardships, and we today are reaping the reward of their toils and sufferings.

THE END.